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GENERAL ASSEMBLY

PROVISIONAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE FOURTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Wednesday, 21 February 1990, at 3 p.m.

<u>President:</u>	Mr. WOHLFART (Vice-President)	(Luxembourg)
later:	Mr. AL-ANBARI (Vice-President)	(Iraq)
later:	Mr. ADOUKI (Vice-President)	(Congo)
later:	Mr. BEN MOUSSA (Vice-President)	(Morocco)
later:	Mr. HURST (Vice-President)	(Antigua and Barbuda)

- General debate [8] (continued)

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In the absence of the President, Mr. Wohlfart (Luxembourg), Vice-President,
took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 8 (continued)

GENERAL DEBATE

Mr. GHEZAL (Tunisia) (interpretation from French): When he addressed the Assembly on 3 October last, at the forty-fourth regular session, the Tunisian Foreign Minister, having dwelt at length on the danger to mankind of pollution and the deterioration of the environment, went on to say:

"Narcotic drugs constitute another crime that has taken on extremely grave proportions: they have a negative effect on human beings and society that is so terrifying that it hardly needs to be underlined. [I refer to the scourge of drugs.] The international community as a whole must as a matter of urgency aim at eradicating this scourge through redoubled joint efforts."

(A/44/PV.16, p. 66)

Those remarks conveyed the full extent of my country's interest in the devastating phenomenon of drugs, although it has not been directly stricken by this scourge, since Tunisia is not a producer country, a consumer country, or a narcotics-transit country.

Today no society is safe from the evil of drugs. No State can remain indifferent to the explosive danger that is spreading menacingly even in regions where it used not to exist, such as Africa, which has become a transit route. There is no boundary the drug cartels and their crimes cannot cross. By virtue of the dimensions they have assumed, narcotics and illicit trafficking now pose a new and horrendous threat to the integrity of the social fabric of entire populations, as was almost the case in Colombia, a country whose exemplary courage we hail: it decided to meet this deadly challenge head on. Drug abuse and illicit trafficking

(Mr. Ghezal, Tunisia)

lead to increased crime and the spread of terrorism. They impede social and economic development, and they endanger the mental and physical health of individuals and their very lives, and this is particularly true of young people.

It is the duty of the international community to commit itself resolutely and unitedly to fighting this common enemy.

While today urgently seeking ways and means to reduce and eliminate the production, marketing and illicit use of drugs, we must not fail to inquire into the causes of the proliferation of this evil in various societies. We shall find that those causes are poverty, squalor, unemployment and ignorance - in other words, a deteriorating and increasingly fragile social environment in which often the sole refuge of young people can easily and perniciously become drug addiction, inevitably leading to decline and self-destruction.

The authorities are of course in duty bound first and foremost to tackle the problem of illicit drug use and trafficking in order to prevent or remedy such situations, in the first place through the adoption of appropriate legislation and the setting up of the means needed to curb consumption, and through the strengthening and development of facilities and programmes capable of providing drug addicts with treatment and rehabilitation, while organizing campaigns to educate populations as to the dangers of this scourge. But such measures, though indispensable, cannot produce lasting or effective results without the appropriate improvement of the material and cultural living standards, the creation of employment and thus of new sources of income capable of restoring or preserving the socio-economic fabric of society.

The Tunisian Government, for its part, has spared no effort to ensure that Tunisia, which is an open country, does not become a transit route for drug traffickers who could possibly circulate in my country's considerable tourist

(Mr. Ghezal, Tunisia)

business. To that end we have shown our determination by taking preventive legislative and administrative measures having to do with control of the marketing of psychotropic substances, the curing of actual cases of drug abuse, and law enforcement. The customs authorities have considerably stepped up their systematic inspections to prevent illicit transit.

None the less it is true that the efforts that have been made and sustained at the national level are not sufficient to curb this scourge of narcotics, no matter how extensive and vigorous those measures may be. They must therefore be supported and complemented by resolute action at the regional and international levels.

In that respect we welcome the setting of international standards by the United Nations in the field of narcotics. I refer to the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961, as amended by the 1972 Protocol, and the 1971 Convention on Psychotropic Substances, and, recently, the United Nations Convention against Illicit Trafficking in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, which was adopted in 1988 and has been signed by my country.

The 1988 Convention is of special importance because it bolsters international co-operation in law enforcement and narcotics control by spelling out new areas of co-operation, such as the extradition of traffickers, aid to transit countries and the elimination of illicit crops. Those are precisely the measures that must urgently be applied.

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(Mr. Ghezal, Tunisia)

In addition to these legal instruments, there is the Declaration on drug abuse and the Comprehensive Multidisciplinary Outline of Future Activities in Drug Abuse Control, adopted in 1987 by the International Conference on the issue. These two instruments remain valid and provide a workable framework for national and multilateral activities.

Whatever action the Assembly takes, it should draw on the policies and activities incorporated in the Outline and on the results achieved through the implementation of the various treaties. My delegation believes that in any programme that we may adopt we must seek to consolidate existing means of action. The temptation to set up new machinery must be resisted unless it is proved to be necessary in the light of the new dimensions of the problem.

The future global programme of action to be adopted by the special session must set concrete long-term objectives. It must focus the same attention on the different aspects of the drug question - supply, demand, and treatment, and social rehabilitation of victims, in accordance with the principles enunciated in the 1987 Comprehensive Multidisciplinary Outline.

Naturally, the producer countries are called upon in the present situation to eradicate the cultivation of illicit plants. However, since they are for the most part developing countries, they will no doubt need international co-operation and aid to substitute new crops for those used in the manufacture of drugs.

As the law of the market indicates that it is demand that determines and shapes supply, measures to reduce demand must be given high priority. In this respect, it is hoped that the forthcoming summit in London in April 1990, which will be devoted to the problem of demand, will encourage the developed countries to do their utmost to reduce their illicit consumption of narcotics.

(Mr. Ghezal, Tunisia)

This arduous task of the United Nations in the fight against drugs, which is now among its major priorities, can be carried out successfully only if the system's various activities in this context are co-ordinated and the various services restructured. This will be necessary to avoid the misapplication of resources or even the wasting of human and material resources assigned to the drug sector.

Mr. ENGELL (Denmark): Many words have been devoted to drug problems over the years. This special session of the General Assembly and the initiatives to be taken demonstrate that those words are being translated into action, although there is still a long way to go. The international community's response to the drug problem should be firm and co-ordinated, leaving our adversaries in no doubt that they will be apprehended, prosecuted and punished. There must be no safe haven for drug terrorists.

I should like at the outset to refer to the statement of the Irish Minister for Justice on behalf of the European Community and its member States. The Danish Government fully endorses the very important points he made.

Furthermore, like my Nordic colleagues, I wish to draw attention to document A/S-17/6, concerning Nordic co-operation in the fight against drug abuse. As will be seen, that co-operation has yielded very spectacular results.

It is a characteristic feature of the Danish drug situation - and I believe this applies to other European countries also - that we are fighting a mixed abuse of various types of drugs, of combinations of drugs and alcohol, and of drugs and medicine. This hampers effective control of the supply sources and puts heavy demands on preventive measures, as well as on the treatment of drug abusers.

In Denmark we have for several years intensively targeted demand reduction, not least through campaigns aimed at the young generation. We have noted a certain stabilization in the drug abuse pattern at a figure corresponding to 0.5 per cent

(Mr. Engell, Denmark)

of young people between 15 and 34 years of age, and hope that this is a consequence of this policy.

Even though research seems to indicate that young Danes have become more cautious and conscious with regard to trying drugs, a constant figure for the average age of about 28 shows that there is a real, new influx into the group of drug abusers, including the hard-drug abusers. Like other countries, Denmark is experiencing a substantial increase in drug-related crime, and the number of drug abusers in Danish prisons is growing steadily and now represents about 25 per cent of the inmates. A particularly unfortunate fact is that the number of children whose parents are drug abusers is still rising. The figure has almost tripled since the beginning of the 1980s. We also know that drug abuse constitutes a very considerable factor in the spreading of AIDS, a factor that is curbed only with difficulty. Those are the reasons for the Danish Government's support of increased efforts in the fight against drugs, nationally, regionally and internationally.

Those in certain circles have advocated the idea of reducing the crime related to drugs by legalizing a few types of drugs. This, in our view, is no way to proceed; we wish to dissociate ourselves most strongly from the idea. Such a strategy is not acceptable to the Danish Government and would be detrimental to the whole philosophy behind the 1988 Convention and other international commitments.

If increased national efforts to fight drug abuse are to succeed, it is, in our opinion, essential that they encompass prevention and treatment of drug abusers in order to hamper demand, as well as effective control in order to obstruct the supply of drugs.

As far as preventive measures are concerned, we have also been quite successful in involving the police and educational and social authorities in close

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co-operation to prevent drug abuse and drug-related crime. Our experience illustrates the necessity of co-ordination among various government agencies dealing with young people.

Treatment of drug abusers requires innovative thinking. In my opinion the trend towards mixed abuse and diversified abuser groups necessitates, if treatment is to be successful, a spectrum of known and new methods, including the involvement of families and non-governmental organizations.

(Mr. Engell, Denmark)

The United Nations Convention against Illicit Trafficking in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, adopted in December 1988, was a milestone in United Nations co-operation against drugs. Denmark signed the Convention at the Conference and progress towards ratification is well under way. It is my hope that we and countries with which we collaborate closely will be able to deposit our instruments of ratifications within a very short time.

Developments in Europe have over the past year opened new opportunities for co-operation at the regional level in combating drug crimes. We have already noted examples of such co-operation with Central and Eastern European States, and my Government very much welcomes this promising development.

As regards the supply of drugs to the international market, we are facing a difficult problem which, first and foremost, calls for energetic efforts by Governments confronted with illegal production in their own country. They deserve our full joint support.

The Government of Colombia has responded to this challenge with a courage and determination that command the admiration of all nations. As a consequence of President Barco's speech at the forty-fourth session of the General Assembly, the attention of the whole world was focused on the menace that the illicit drug cartels present not only to Colombia or Latin America but to the whole world. The Danish Government was among the first to react in concrete terms to President Barco's appeal. Only a few days after the speech Denmark entered into negotiations with the United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control (UNFDAC) with a view to supporting its activities in Colombia.

At the same time, the Government of Denmark has committed itself to a very substantial increase in its general-purpose contribution to UNFDAC.

The Government of Denmark welcomes the development by UNFDAC of the subregional master plan approach. This method of integrating various regional

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plans and subregional activities is aimed at avoiding the so-called balloon effect whereby illicit trafficking or cultivation, when repressed in one country, simply moves to a neighbouring country. We also whole-heartedly support the law enforcement approach adopted by UNPDAC, and I wish to assure UNPDAC of our continued support for its activities.

In the view of the Government of Denmark, it is important that all countries in a position to do so support the activities of UNPDAC, and we hope to see new contributions as a result of the special session of the General Assembly.

Let me end by assuring President Garba of my delegation's full support for his endeavours to ensure the successful conclusion of the special session, thus setting new targets in United Nations co-operation against drugs, and of my Government's full and continued support for United Nations activities in the field of combating the drug scourge.

We hope that the political declaration and the global programme of action to be adopted will constitute a solid basis for future work under the auspices of the United Nations.

Mr. BOHM (Czechoslovakia) (spoke in Slovak; English text furnished by the delegation): May I, on behalf of the Czechoslovakia delegation, congratulate President Garba on his election to his high and responsible office. We are convinced that under his wise and experienced guidance these deliberations will lead to the adoption of specific conclusions and practical measures that will contribute significantly to an effective struggle against one of the greatest evils facing mankind today, the illicit use of narcotic drugs. We are confident that this goal can be achieved if our Organization brings together all the human, intellectual and material potential and if it utilizes the ample experience of United Nations bodies that have already expended considerable efforts and energy in this field.

(Mr. Bohm, Czechoslovakia)

The illicit use, production and distribution of and traffic in narcotics, as well as the constantly growing demand for them, represent a colossal problem of global dimensions that is comparable to such challenges to mankind as armaments or environmental pollution. Nowadays this problem spares no geographical region or State; it poses a threat to the health and dignity of individuals as well as whole sectors of the population. The fact that the illicit traffic in narcotics is estimated to bring in \$500 million annually shows the ramifications of this system of international crime, which in some parts of the world threatens the very structure of civilized society.

From this rostrum we wish to express special appreciation of and support for the resolute struggle against the organized narco-Mafia by the States of Latin America. We welcomed the initiative of the President of Colombia, Mr. Virgilio Barco, concerning the convening of this special session, and joined in sponsoring the relevant General Assembly resolutions. We also welcomed the Cartagena Declaration, which created a basis for the first real anti-drug strategy.

Czechoslovakia is paying considerable attention to the problem of illicit use of and traffic in narcotics, although that problem does not affect us immediately to the same extent as in some other parts of the world. From the international point of view, we are among the transit countries situated along the so-called Balkan route, starting in countries of production and ending in countries of Western Europe. The narcotics situation in my country reflects the overall situation in Europe, with the difference that drug addicts in Czechoslovakia do not abuse the so-called classic narcotics, such as hashish, cocaine or LSD. For several years now the most widespread form of drug abuse in my country has been the sniffing of volatile chemical substances.

(Mr. Bohm, Czechoslovakia)

One of the fundamental goals set for itself by the pluralistic society that is now taking shape in my country is the consistent defence of human and civil rights, including freedom of movement, and we have abolished the artificial obstacles that formerly hampered such movement. We are aware that the opening of borders with neighbouring countries and the free movement of people may in the future increase the problem of the transit of narcotics across our territory and possibly also their abuse. We are therefore adopting comprehensive security, customs, legislative and preventive medical and social measures in order at least to maintain the present relatively favourable situation.

In the recent past Czechoslovakia has considerably increased its efforts to play a more active part in international co-operation in the suppression of drug abuse and illicit trafficking in narcotic and psychotropic substances. We shall continue these efforts.

This year we are considering acceding to the Protocol Amending the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961, which was concluded in Geneva in 1972. Czechoslovakia has been a party to the Single Convention since 1964.

(Mr. Bohm, Czechoslovakia)

We meet all our international-treaty commitments, and for many years we have fulfilled voluntarily all our obligations resulting from the 1972 Protocol.

Czechoslovakia is one of the group of more than 70 States that have voluntarily extended the system of obligatory export and import authorizations, not only to psychotropic substances under Schedule III but also to psychotropic substances under Schedule IV.

We have initiated the necessary ratification proceedings in respect of the 1988 Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances. This process is closely linked with the proposed amendment of our penal code, whose purpose is to ensure, among other things, fulfilment of the international legal obligations that will arise for Czechoslovakia as a party to the Convention.

We are prepared to meet voluntarily the commitments resulting from some of the Convention's provisions in the field of extradition and on questions of legal aid, monitored deliveries, commercial transport and the carriage of mail, even before the Convention enters into force.

Our customs authorities and other competent bodies are taking systematic measures to prevent the transit of narcotics across our territory. Dog-handlers and service dogs are being deployed almost continuously - focusing, in particular, on what is referred to as the Balkan route. Specialized seminars are organized for customs-administration personnel, and preventive action is taken on the entry-exit border along the Balkan route. The Czechoslovak customs authorities are taking an active part in sessions of the United Nations Commission on Narcotic Drugs, the Customs Co-operation Council in Brussels and the South-East Working Group, and are co-operating with the United States Drug Enforcement Administration's office in Vienna. Good bilateral co-operation with States bordering on Czechoslovakia - particularly Austria, the Hungarian Republic and the Federal Republic of

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(Mr. Bohm, Czechoslovakia)

Germany - is unfolding. We are ready to enter into such arrangements with all interested States. This co-operation is already bearing fruit. For example, a smuggling route by air, via Bombay and Prague, to West Berlin has been exposed; and the Czechoslovak criminal police authorities are currently co-operating with the Austrian and the Danish criminal police on specific cases involving international smuggling in narcotics.

We have taken the first steps towards rejoining the international criminal police organization INTERPOL. We expect that by returning to this organization Czechoslovakia will increase its participation in common efforts to limit the transit of drugs into the European region. At the recent session of the United Nations Commission on Narcotic Drugs Control in Vienna we expressed our support for the establishment of a European group of the Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies (HONLEA), and, together with other countries, we sponsored the relevant resolution. We hope that this will open up new horizons of closer co-operation between European countries in combating drug abuse.

In the international community there is agreement that the drug problem has long since surged beyond the scope of national borders and has assumed a truly global character. That being the case, it affects, to one degree or another, the life of every individual country as well as of the international community as a whole. The struggle against narcotic drugs can be successful only if we all join together in adopting uncompromising and effective measures that will break the vicious circle of illicit traffic, and if the existing regional, as well as international, structures dealing with this problem are strengthened.

It is from this standpoint that we view the global programme of action, which, we believe, can be a real basis for the development of effective international co-operation in the fight for an international society free of drugs and, therefore, free of illicit trafficking and drug abuse.

(Mr. Bohm, Czechoslovakia)

Also important will be how consistently the decisions taken by us are implemented in practice. We therefore consider it important that follow-up meetings to this special session be held. The first such opportunity will be the world ministerial summit to reduce demand for drugs and combat the cocaine threat, to be held, at the invitation of the Government of the United Kingdom, in London. I should like to express our high appreciation of this initiative and our thanks for the invitation extended to us to attend the conference.

In conclusion, I should like to express the conviction that our deliberations will help to strengthen international co-operation in combating drug abuse. For our part, we are prepared to exert all our strength, ability and energy to ensure that this unique opportunity is not wasted.

Mr. JOSEPH (Australia): According to the list of speakers, my speech is to last 12 minutes. Let me give everyone a break by compressing it a little.

For the third time in as many years we are engaged in a major multilateral meeting devoted to narcotics. No doubt our efforts will be rewarded with the adoption of a suitably worded declaration and programme of action. That, of course, is splendid and very much the point of this week's meetings. Yet, in reality, we already have plans and declarations aplenty. They are to be found in earlier General Assembly resolutions and in the 1961 and 1971 Conventions, as well as in the new Convention on trafficking concluded in 1988.

Others in this debate have recalled the 1987 international conference. That conference too resulted in a political declaration and a wide-ranging action plan.

So here we are, just over two years later, again furrowing in the same ground. My conclusion is that international agreement on what needs to be done has pretty well been secured. Where there has been a shortfall - a lack of purposeful

(Mr. Joseph, Australia)

action, perhaps, is in implementation of the agreed policies. There is nothing particularly original about this judgement; listening to the Secretary-General yesterday, one realized that he clearly had reached the same conclusion.

Nor am I implying an absence of political will. The truth is that implementation of even widely agreed measures and universally shared goals was never going to be easy. Often the measures concerned tread on sensitive domestic jurisdictions and sovereignties, or require action in legislative, legal and, lately, financial areas, where other legitimate concerns - among them, human rights and civil liberties - can intrude. If one adds to this the broader, social problems of poverty, unemployment and the breakdown of traditional structures one realizes that it is no wonder that implementation of drug-control measures may sometimes be undertaken at a more measured pace than, ideally, should be the case.

Where there is scope for immediate action is here at the United Nations. Here, States do have it in their power to ensure that the Organization's impressive credentials to help cope with a pernicious global problem are not undermined by inadequate structures and/or deficient resources.

(Mr. Joseph, Australia)

A lot has already been said about resources. The Secretary-General underlined the issue in his statement yesterday. The fact is that problems of chronic resource deficiency have long bedevilled the United Nations drugs units. Efforts elsewhere in the system have likewise been reduced by under-resourcing. This situation has persisted in spite of repeated calls by Member States for the Secretary-General to accord drugs activities a higher priority and to provide the necessary wherewithal to enable the United Nations to discharge its mandated obligations.

Some illustrative observations may be relevant. One is that allocations for the two drugs units financed from the regular budget have not grown in real terms in a decade; and, indeed, since 1988 have been declining. As a proportion of the global regular budget, funding for the Division on Narcotic Drugs and the International Narcotics Control Board is down to .4 of 1 per cent. Despite the increased work-load, authorized staffing levels for drugs related activities are off, with cuts in excess of the average for the United Nations as a whole. In the case of the United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control, while it has been able to count on increased voluntary contributions in recent years, these continue to remain modest, particularly compared to what is available to the traffickers. The question is whether this is acceptable or rational.

My delegation happens to believe that it is neither acceptable nor rational. And we do not see the solution as being simply to offer more through extra-budgetary resources. What is needed, what this special session should decide, is what it is prepared to devote on a regular basis to the United Nations drugs programme, and then to ensure that the necessary funds are allocated and allocated on a regular basis.

(Mr. Joseph, Australia)

If, as the Secretary-General implies, the need is for addition to the regular budget, then so be it. There is an urgency and immediacy about the narcotics problem which demands an exceptional response. The sums involved would not be large, but the returns would be considerable.

Resources is one issue. The other is the need to deploy available resources in the most effective manner. This leads me to the question of organization.

There are currently three separate United Nations bodies devoted to drugs work. We recognize that each might have been created in response to a specific need, and that each might be held to discharge a particular responsibility. Yet in the Australian view, it all adds up to an awkward structure for handling what is widely recognized to be an escalating international problem.

This special session may not yet be ready to embrace wholly the calls for a unified body under one drugs co-ordinator. But we would hope that the session would allow that at least the merits of such a structure be put to careful study. It is difficult to say more in advance of the Secretary-General's report on the United Nations system-wide efforts, expected now in final form by the end of March. Nevertheless, we would note that it was concerns about present structure which led Member States to adopt, in General Assembly resolution 44/141, the call for a group of experts to look at ways of enhancing the performance of the United Nations drugs related machinery.

The Secretary-General has since indicated that he will appoint the members of this group after the conclusion of the special session. It is my country's view that these experts, in looking at the various options, should carefully examine whether the United Nations drugs units based in Vienna should be unified under a full-time head with the establishment of a single United Nations programme in the area.

(Mr. Joseph, Australia)

None of this is to suggest that the United Nations drugs bodies are not already performing valuable work. But there is more that the United Nations could and should be doing. And, as a result of this special session, there will no doubt be more that it will be asked to do.

But, to repeat, the Organization must have the necessary resources and structure to handle these tasks. If the special session does no more than sensitize States to these needs it will have been worth while. What we must avoid is falling into a cycle of well-intentioned conferences aimed at galvanizing international action only to find this action thwarted for want of organization and resources. Down that track lies merely the prospect of renewed calls for further conferences without, I suggest, any hope of impact on the real problem.

Mr. FIGUEREDO PLANCHART (Venezuela) (interpretation from Spanish): This special session of the General Assembly devoted to the strengthening of international co-operation in the struggle against the illicit trafficking of drugs and psychotropic substances has aroused the determination of the international community to launch a determined struggle against one of the most perverse and destabilizing scourges of international society today.

The Governments that have decided to meet here in this Assembly are determined to strengthen plans for international co-operation, making them more effective in keeping with the magnitude and complexity of the challenge confronting the nations that are part of this system.

International co-operation is the basic instrument of States as they endeavour to eradicate the harmful effects of the consumption and illicit trafficking of drugs and psychotropic substances. For this reason, we congratulate this Assembly

(Mr. Figueredo-Planchart, Venezuela)

and, through it, the delegation of Colombia and its illustrious President, His Excellency Mr. Virgilio Barco, on the initiative that has brought us together at this special session.

This scourge affects nations in different ways and in varying degrees. For some, the key issue is consumption, while for others, it is production and illicit traffic. Still others, because of their key geographical location, have become transit countries. The challenge facing us is to join forces and to strengthen our capacity to deal more effectively with all aspects of this phenomenon. That is why we are meeting here.

Drug traffickers undermine the health of the people, weaken society's institutions, give rise to the emergence of such phenomena as terrorism and weapons smuggling and to the resurgence of mercenary activities. They endanger the very security of entire nations. The dynamics of this infernal cycle can be seen in the supply-demand binomial, a process that is lucrative for a few and destructive for the many. Our task is not only to eradicate the crime; it is also to acquire deeper knowledge of the psycho-social, social-political and social-economic and cultural realities surrounding the drug phenomenon.

(Mr. Figueredo Planchart, Venezuela)

We in Venezuela believe that the United Nations must work out a global strategy in keeping with the magnitude of the world problem. What the system has accomplished so far has been constructive and beneficial, but clearly insufficient.

We are one of the pioneer countries in the fight against drugs. Although we have not been labelled a producing or consuming country, we are included in the group of so-called transit countries. The body of norms and the institutional framework we have established, while providing us with certain tools, are still not sufficient for the unequal struggle. The year 1984 was an important one, both on the national and on the world level. Venezuela promulgated its Organic Law on Narcotic and Psychotropic Substances, one of the most advanced in the field. The Quito Declaration described drug trafficking for the first time as a crime against humanity, and in the General Assembly a draft resolution was submitted that led to the final text adopted at Vienna in December 1988.

According to President Carlos Andres Perez, our Government is firmly committed at both the domestic and the international level, to participate in all joint action to eradicate this crime against humanity, including the seizure of assets acquired by illicit activities and the creation of machinery to prevent the laundering of profits derived from drug trafficking and the fraudulent use of banks and the international financial system.

The Venezuelan President views the crusade against drugs as the common responsibility of the whole of the international community, including the consumer, producer and transit countries.

The community of nations has accepted its peremptory duty to send the message to drug traffickers that their activities will no longer be viewed with complacent indifference and that there will no longer be any compromise in the fight against their criminal activities. The dynamics of this evil make it essential that we

(Mr. Figueredo Planchart, Venezuela)

awaken the conscience of the people and encourage the participation of society as a whole. While it is true that we face a common enemy, it is also true that society as a whole must, in a spirit of self-criticism, face the fact that without demand supply would not prosper and business would not be so profitable.

What action must we take to ensure that the community of nations will be successful in combating the production, consumption and traffic in illicit drugs? In what concrete terms must we view the many facets of the problem, and how can we make a balanced assessment of the individual and collective capacity of States to deal with this serious problem?

The plan of action that we shall be adopting will call for determination and commitment by States to revitalize the bodies in the United Nations system entrusted with this subject, expanding and improving co-ordination. New technical and administrative bodies will probably not have to be set up; rather, we must strengthen and make adjustments in existing bodies and give them the human and financial resources they need to deal with their increased responsibilities.

For Latin America the drug problem has assumed difficult dimensions. It is being tackled, as many countries have shown, in spite of the burden of foreign debt, the serious economic crisis, the budgetary deficit, which we shall be unable to balance in the immediate future, and the difficulties regarding advanced technological means and adequate financial and human resources with which to deal with this question. We therefore advocate integration of efforts.

Those who organize, direct and carry out activities related to this illicit traffic in death are spinning webs and corroding economic systems and processes. We have tried to work out a joint strategy that will strike at the weakest point for the drug cartels, namely, the laundering of funds.

The United Nations Convention against Illicit Trafficking in Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, adopted at Vienna in 1988, supplements existing instruments on that subject and urges the international community to attack the criminal activities of drug traffickers in areas in which they are particularly sensitive: financing, freedom of movement and organization. We must see to it that every State implements the provisions of that Convention, even if only on a temporary basis. My country has given priority to the internal constitutional procedures required for approval of the Convention, and we therefore hope to announce its early ratification.

It is the duty of States to sensitize and delegate ever greater responsibility to the society in the field of preventive action, without abandoning their supervisory role. The family, as the basic nucleus of society, must play its part, not only because it is the natural environment out of which demand arises but also because the effects of action by the family may well be more beneficial and lasting. Unfortunately, all too frequently the technical support needed to make family action successful does not exist. For that reason, we believe it to be important to encourage and support the creation of regional training centres, with short, specific programmes, to produce the trained personnel so sorely lacking in many parts of the world and make possible the exchange of ideas and information needed to promote co-ordinated action. In addition, we must promote a system of information and continuous monitoring, with internationally shared data, to serve as a point of departure for action programmes and enable us to make a practical assessment of our achievements.

My delegation believes that the key to the success of these activities lies in the efficient co-ordination of programmes promoted by bodies within the United Nations system, relevant specialized agencies and non-governmental organizations.*

*Mr. Al-Anbari (Iraq), Vice-President, took the Chair.

(Mr. Figueredo Planchart, Venezuela)

Another aspect that should be highlighted during the special session is the harmful effect the activities of the drug traffickers have on an ever-larger group of developing countries. Simply because of their geographical location they have become transit countries on the drug route towards the distribution centres. These countries also need international co-operation in order to obtain the means to protect themselves against the traffic transiting through their territories, without having to use resources that in other conditions could be allocated to their development needs. There is hardly any need to say that drug mafias are being established in those countries that could turn them into producing countries.

One of the objects of such co-operation must be to exercise control over the international marketing of chemical precursors - essential products, equipment and material that are used to produce the drugs. For this is an example of the way in which the licit marketing of products can unintentionally serve to perpetuate the phenomenon.

The problem of the improper use of and illicit trafficking in drugs was discussed by the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, which correctly took a global view of the phenomenon. The Belgrade document summarizes the elements that, in my country's opinion, are essential to a determination that drug trafficking is a danger not only to the fiscal health of peoples but also to the political, economic, social and cultural structures of the countries concerned. We would stress the concept set forth in this important document, signed by Venezuela, that responsibility must be shared and that there is a need for better international financial co-operation to support the efforts of the third-world countries to ensure crop substitution through programmes for integrated rural development and the preservation of the environment.

(Mr. Figueredo Planchart, Venezuela)

The struggle against this contemporary evil has found in the President of Colombia, Mr. Virgilio Barco, a valiant combatant. We remember so vividly the statement he made to the General Assembly last September. We Venezuelans fully support his courageous position in the crusade against drugs.

The United Kingdom initiative in calling for the convening, in conjunction with the United Nations, of a high-level international conference to consider, among other questions, a reduction in the demand for illicit drugs is also fully supported in our country.

We are very gratified at the success of the summit conference against drugs held in Cartagena de Indias by the Heads of State of Bolivia, Colombia, Peru and the United States. Dealing with the problem from a global point of view and tackling simultaneously the production, illicit trade and consumption of these substances is the approach which we find correct. The strategy worked out in Cartagena is a proper response to the problems confronting those countries. The statement that was adopted there should serve as the indispensable point of reference for our countries in considering the initiatives to be taken to eliminate drug trafficking.

In conclusion, I wish to refer to work that has been assigned to the United Nations International Law Commission - that is, to prepare a draft code of crimes against the peace and security of mankind. In view of the world-wide repercussions of the problem of the illicit trafficking in drugs, nothing could be more appropriate than to include this generic crime in the list of crimes against mankind. We believe that there has been unwarranted timidity at the international level about moving towards the adoption of this definition.

We have come to this special session of the Assembly in the conviction and the hope that our activities here will constitute a new bridge that will support the hard road of our common action against a heinous crime which is being committed by

(Mr. Figueredo Planchart, Venezuela)

a tiny stratum of our societies and which is rejected by the community as a whole, hard-working and law-abiding. It is to be hoped that we shall return to our countries with new means to help us neutralize these outcasts of our collective world.

Mr. VITALONE (Italy) (interpretation from French): We now have an extraordinary, perhaps unique, opportunity to refuse to resign ourselves to the present situation, and to find an active and concrete response to the tragic problem of drugs, to meet the desperate expectations of countless young people, teenagers and even children who, because of the blackmail exerted by a mighty criminal force - perhaps the deadliest force in the history of mankind - are experiencing the tragic confiscation and violation of their dignity. But if we are to take full advantage of this opportunity, we must proceed at once to translate into effective action the choices that will emerge from our work here.

Our concern to achieve consensus must not lead us into time-consuming negotiations that will serve only to dilute the content and weaken the impact of the initiatives that must be taken. We must all shoulder our responsibilities. We are here not to mediate between conflicting interests but to work together to find a common remedy to a common tragedy. If we allow the monstrous evil of drug trafficking to continue to extend the tentacles of its domination throughout the world, no one will be able to claim innocence.

Agreement is certainly possible today in a world that has just seen such radical changes, upsetting a pattern of outmoded antagonisms and demonstrating that it is possible to uproot the suspicion, hostility and distrust that are poisoning men's minds and to plant in their place the seeds of trust, openness and co-operation in solidarity.

(Mr. Vitalone, Italy)

I should like above all to confirm a commitment: the commitment of the Italian Government to treat all initiatives jointly agreed upon during our work here as absolute obligations and priorities, the commitment to exert every effort to ensure their speedy implementation. In the spirit of the agreements reached in Vienna in December 1988 by the United Nations, the Italian Parliament and Government are already actively engaged in introducing modern and effective anti-drug laws and promoting the broadest possible international co-operation.

We are aware that the drug problem is the result of the complex interaction of many factors. We agree with those who see the demand for drugs arising from a complex blend of social distress and individual malaise. But, faced with a phenomenon whose causes are so hard to pinpoint, we cannot afford the luxury of scholarly dissertations; we must prevent and fight against demand, however and wherever it occurs.

(Mr. Vitalone, Italy)

We agree with those who think that demand creates supply, but we continue to believe that demand and supply have a vicious-circle effect of mutual stimulation, so both need to be attacked, on different fronts and by different means, but with the same intensity and the same determination. That was emphasized at the recent Cartagena summit, whose conclusions recall the need to promote greater awareness of the social and economic problems affecting some producing countries.

Our proposals are based on an integrated approach where prevention and control functions are complementary, and where the United Nations would serve both as a source of recommendations to individual States and as a central participant in the plan's implementation. The functions of this action would be integrated, its administration unified, its implementation gradual and its targets and resources carefully planned, and its results would be monitored.

Different types of demand require different responses. The first, and most important point, is to reduce the number of potential drug users through suitable preventive measures. In that area little has been done so far on the international level.

We propose that international organizations that have contributed in the past to intensive literacy campaigns world-wide should now take part in a new literacy campaign targeted against drug abuse.

There is no magic formula for deterrence and rehabilitation strategies, but the United Nations can draw up intelligent recipes by rationally compiling the results of the most advanced research and formulating specific codes of conduct to by which States can co-ordinate their own choices.

The United Nations has wide and varied experience in the area of combating supply. On the basis of that experience we can venture to draw some realistic conclusions. The supply of drugs has so far been conditioned by market forces.

(Mr. Vitalone, Italy)

The strategies of our response have largely proved inadequate, and as a reaction legalization and liberalization have been proposed. That option would be tantamount to an admission of defeat by the international community and an abandonment of all attempts to solve the problem. It would not only increase the number of users by removing inhibiting controls but would be a cruel betrayal of many millions of addicts who are held hostage to a tyrannical habit.

We feel that the response to the problem has been ineffectual because of its piecemeal and inconsistent objectives and in its resources and their management. We are proposing an integrated approach based on policies of development and legal assistance, and national and international regulatory and penal policies. In the immediate future, the role of the United Nations must be expanded.

Certain priorities must be established on the basis of feasibility - token action is useless - and cost-effectiveness. Those criteria demand that we make a choice of our goals and the means to achieve them. The temptation to do everything at once could condemn us to paralysis or, at least, to ineffectiveness.

In our view there are two areas for priority action: The first is to involve the banking and financial system in all countries to stop the laundering of drug money, implementing the conclusions of the final report of the group of financial experts established at the Paris summit. Secondly, there must be joint action for prevention, treatment and control of supply, targeting the three regions where the drug problem is particularly grave: the Golden Triangle, the Golden Crescent and the Andean sub-region. Recent events in those areas provide convincing evidence that the traditional distinction among producer, trafficking and consumer countries is becoming increasingly blurred.

(Mr. Vitalone, Italy)

Action against money laundering should be carried out on four levels: regulatory action to co-ordinate the banking and financial laws of all countries in accordance with the criterion of transparency; penal action to maximize judicial co-operation through common rules ensuring a consistent response and gradually assembling integrated legal systems to give an international dimension to our strategy and permit prosecution of drug trafficking as a crime against the international community; economic action to seize the profits of illegal activities; and organizational action to create interlinked national data banks for the immediate identification of illegal activities.

We must make sure that formal agreement to these principles is not accompanied by behaviour inconsistent with them. The international community could establish a system of incentives and disincentives to compel uniform behaviour by States. There are numerous means available to it: conventions, treaties, co-operation, development assistance - all could contain clauses subjecting the banking and financial sectors of member States to criteria of transparency in keeping with decisions manifested in the Basel principles. The United Nations is the obvious institution to recommend the choices States should make and to monitor their implementation.

The resources invested thus far in various forms of bilateral and multilateral, horizontal and vertical co-operation have been excessive in comparison with the results achieved and inadequate in comparison with the desired goals. The strategy must be completely reviewed. Disorganized and isolated initiatives are futile. To be effective, action must be concentrated in regions where drug production, processing and trafficking are an integral part of economic development. To cite President Paz Zamora, we must replace the drug economy with an economy that is healthy, efficient and competitive.

(Mr. Vitalone, Italy)

The programme formulated by the United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control is a step in that direction. Italy has firmly supported it and will continue to do so, for we believe strongly that co-ordinated action by the international community is more effective than isolated action by States, however generous it may be.

We do not for a moment deny the validity of bilateral co-operation, which can be valuable and even indispensable. But we need to define a general frame of reference including initiatives to be taken by all with the means to do so while guaranteeing the resources necessary for the world-wide plans pursued by the Fund in a spirit of dedication and self-sacrifice.

Bilateral and multilateral co-operation can be integrated, providing a large number of institutions capable of action. There is a central role for the initiatives of parliaments, not only because of their legislative activities and the political orientation they give Government action, but also because of their ability to promote agreements on international co-operation.

Integration must apply also to the police, the courts, the health and welfare sector and the volunteer organizations that are so valuable, so that effective strategies for deterrence and rehabilitation can be devised. Beginning with this special session, the United Nations can give impetus to the growth and development of a new approach of greater solidarity and to a more stringent notion of international law.

(Mr. Vitalone, Italy)

The model strategy we are proposing to guarantee the effectiveness of this machinery calls for the unified administration of measures and effective control of results.

We can no longer afford to waste resources and energy on non-homogeneous, intermittent and insufficiently co-ordinated interventions that may produce many minor results but will fail to achieve the major goal, a world without drugs. We must now undertake a bold reappraisal of the institutional structures of United Nations bodies working in the field of drugs so as to maximize the synergies of their undertakings. This means both combining and separating, on a rational basis. It means promptly acknowledging that a given strategy is ineffectual. The United Nations, in addition to being equipped with the necessary instruments to carry out the global programme, should have an independent unit to monitor activities and evaluate their cost-effectiveness. Only thus will it be possible to determine, in the light of the results achieved, what stronger measures are needed.

This concerns all countries without distinction, including those of Europe, and particularly the European Community, which already has the European Commission for the Fight against Drugs (CELAD). During its forthcoming presidency of the Twelve, Italy will endeavour to make the role of the European Community and CELAD as vigorous and incisive as possible.

We would not wish either to overemphasize our capability to respond to the challenge or to relegate our hopes to the realm of mere dreams. I have attempted to provide a concrete, practical outline of the objectives to be attained and the means of attaining them. I have deliberately taken a realistic approach in proposing priority goals and logical decisions.

Here in this Assembly we have neither had a discussion of myths nor celebrated a ritual. Perhaps we have taken a step forward today on the difficult road that

(Mr. Vitalone, Italy)

lies ahead. We all bear a responsibility for the future attainment of our stated goals. If we truly unite our efforts we will win a fight that civilization cannot afford to lose.

Mr. WATHELET (Belgium) (interpretation from French): At the outset I would express our pleasure that Mr. Garba is presiding over this important special session of the General Assembly. I also wish to pay a tribute to the Secretary-General, whose outstanding hard work in the preparations for this session we greatly value.

Situated at the heart of Europe, Belgium is a crossroads of sea, air and land routes, which makes it a prime transit territory for large amounts of drugs from all over the world intended to supply European consumers. Apart from being a transit country, Belgium has over the last decade come to have its own internal market, like all neighbouring countries. Even though there seems to have been a levelling-off in the recent past, the growth in the number of police files on drug-related matters, the number of offenders and the constant growth in the volume of products seized, as well as the number of deaths from overdoses - though considerably less than in other European countries - all provide evidence of the stark reality of this tragedy.

The Belgian Government is convinced that there are four conditions for success in the struggle.

First, it is an absolute necessity that each State realize that drugs must be fought by all possible means, for otherwise our civilizations and the values they share will be gravely endangered by the drug phenomenon.

Each Government must be profoundly aware that drugs pose a grave threat to the freedom of our citizens to act and think; that can never be exaggerated.

(Mr. Wathelet, Belgium)

All Governments must realize that the populations they administer are seriously threatened by drugs, no matter where they may be situated, because it is the young people, the future of all countries, who are most grievously stricken.

All Governments must become fully aware that they share responsibility in the struggle against drugs, and are also to some extent responsible for the spread of the tragic consequences. Whether they act or not, each Government must realize the consequences of its narcotics policy, be it in terms of production, of trafficking or of consumption. This is a matter of high priority for each Government, and we all share a truly collective responsibility.

The second condition for winning the fight against drugs is the realization that each Government, however resolute it may be, and whatever resources it may set in motion, will achieve no concrete results if it acts in isolation.

It is well known that drugs and traffickers do not recognize States or frontiers. Drugs are wherever they are cultivated, stockpiled or consumed. Nowhere escapes the havoc they cause. If they decrease in one place, they will burgeon somewhere else; and they will increase where they once declined.

Thus no activity stands any chance at all unless it is concerted among nations. That is why we are meeting here.

There is no point in fighting and reducing narcotic crops in one place only to see them increase in a more tolerant country. It is pointless to end consumption in one State if a neighbouring State permits sale and consumption. That is why we must work in international frameworks, especially in the United Nations, and that is why we support the decisions of the European Economic Community in this regard.

The third condition for success is gauging the magnitude of the resources invested and the profits of traffickers in what is truly the drug economy. Recent events in Colombia have highlighted the magnitude of the financial, material and human resources available to the drug multinationals, the tentacular networks

(Mr. Wathelet, Belgium)

that have been set up to draw on highly modern and sophisticated technology, which must be countered with at least equivalent resources.

The fourth and last prerequisite for success in our fight against drugs is striking at trafficking wherever it is and in all its dimensions - first production, which one must identify and destroy by offering a substitute economy or agriculture, whatever part of the world is involved, be it Latin America, much in the news in recent months, the Middle East or the Far East, where production is also vast and devastating - and the processing, transportation, distribution and consumption of drugs, as well as the laundering of the colossal amounts of money generated by such trafficking, which can be used to buy anything, even men, even democracies, even States.

Some conservatively estimate that today drug money amounts to \$300 billion, and others estimate \$500 billion, which is between eight and ten times the Belgian budget. That gives one some idea of the new dimensions of the drug phenomenon, the struggle against which requires vast new resources.

Nor must we forget that besides production and consumption there is the need to control precursors, without which drugs cannot be processed, which are an important link in the drug chain and an important area for complicity between producing and consuming countries.

Bolstered by those four convictions, Belgium has decided to take a more active part in the fight against drugs and to find the legal, financial and human resources required by the magnitude of the challenge and the gravity of the situation.

(Mr. Wathelet, Belgium)

What has Belgium decided to do? First, as regards participation in United Nations efforts against drugs, Belgium has decided, and now undertakes, to contribute more substantially to the programmes of action of the United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control. Sums of money for that purpose have been included in the budget of the Belgian Ministry for Development Co-operation. That recent decision will enable us to meet the appeal from the officials of the Fund to become major donors and take part in the administration of the Fund.

Secondly, Belgium plays an active part at the European level in the work of the European committee on the fight against drugs recently set up on the proposal of the French President. In this connection, we have appointed a Belgian co-ordinator for drug-related matters.

Belgium fully endorses the statement of the Irish President, particularly as regards his intention to ratify the Vienna Convention of 20 December 1988, to prepare actively for the implementation of the European single market of 1993 and to take all necessary legislative measures for a more effective fight against drug trafficking.

The third category of decision relates to decisions taken at the national level and here I wish to make five points.

First, last Friday the Belgian Council of Ministers adopted the proposal to ratify the Convention on Psychotropic Substances of 21 February 1971, and this will thus shortly be brought before the Belgian Parliament.

Secondly, last week the Belgian Chamber of Representatives unanimously passed a draft law on money laundering which I recently submitted to Parliament and which, as soon as a vote is taken in the Senate, will permit the confiscation of any assets derived from offences, even those that have changed in nature, as well as income from invested profits. In Belgium money-laundering is an offence that is severely punished.

(Mr. Wathelet, Belgium)

In the same area, Belgium has taken part in the work of the financial action group on money-laundering - the GAFI - which has drawn up an important report on measures to be taken against the laundering of money deriving from drugs. Having approved the conclusions of the report, my colleague the Minister of Finance has just announced his intention to take all necessary measures to ensure that Belgian financial institutions make possible, through greater transparency, improved monitoring of bank accounts and any unusual or large movements of funds in these accounts.

There is no doubt that, if the main countries of refuge for capital generated by drug trafficking took the necessary enforcement measures, the disposal of laundered money, which is the end purpose of drug trafficking, would be gravely affected and the fight against drugs would be more effective.

Thirdly, as regards national policy, we are aware that police techniques in Belgium must be adapted in order to make the fight against large-scale crime incontrovertibly linked to drug trafficking more effective. The judicial authorities have drawn up a document on the problems of monitoring, remuneration of informers, management of information, pseudo-purchases and deferred seizures, a document that will very shortly be brought before the Government and the Parliament.

We have talked about enforcement, the law on confiscation and money-laundering, and police practices. But, while all of that enables Belgium to fight relentlessly against drug trafficking to the full extent of its capabilities, we also believe that, although the enforcement aspect is at the heart of our concerns, we must not neglect the preventive and treatment aspects of the problem. Those are the fourth and fifth points of our national activity.

The population, especially young people, must be informed of the danger of drugs. At a time when the media play an important role in the leisure time of young people and school enrolment is constantly growing, it is possible to

(Mr. Wathelet, Belgium)

disseminate detailed, objective information on the danger to physical and mental health of drug use. While the drugs phenomenon is widely known, its consequences are often unknown or little known.

Fighting drugs also means reducing demand by bringing about socially acceptable living conditions. This is the most difficult area in which to achieve appreciable improvement because it involves global social policy over the long term, but improvement is essential if lasting results are to be achieved.

As to the treatment aspect, the fate of drug addicts must receive special attention because it is essential to help those who have succumbed to this scourge to recover from it, with the aid of social and medical measures, in order to bring down the number of addicts and limit the danger of a relapse.

In conclusion, I wish to point out that there is a very good reason why the United Nations has talked about a third world war. In the form of crime, destruction of health, economic dependence and threats to democracy, drugs are invading us. It is under those various headings that all countries, the countries that we represent, must combine their efforts against those who are building and sustaining the empire of drugs and who constitute the most cynical enemies of mankind now and in the future.

When I say all countries, I mean those on the supply side, which must fight against production, while recognizing that it represents for some up to 25 per cent of their gross national product. I mean those that must fight against the organizers of the marketing of the supply, while recognizing that they will stop at nothing, that they will kill judges, political officials and citizens, and that they can afford to buy anything they like, including the State machinery, in order to ensure the survival of their cartels. I mean those that must stop the laundering of the enormous profits of crime, even if that laundering ensures some measure of their financial health, tax or financial heaven in this respect

(Mr. Wathelet, Belgium)

being possible only at the price of a human hell. I mean those on the demand side, which must track down and suppress the trafficking in and possession of drugs and prevent where possible and treat if necessary victims of this scourge, recognizing that they would be accomplices if they were to close their eyes as their own children, their own youth, their own citizens, died among the syringes.

It is for the sake of these values that Belgium is determined to do its utmost to press ahead with its policy of unrelenting struggle and help to prevent our young people from falling into the trap of drugs and to free those who are already its victims from that slavery. Belgium has no intention of legalizing anything at all. Any such legalization would be at least partial resignation in the face of the challenge confronting us. Our objective cannot be merely to eradicate drug-related crime; we must also eliminate drugs, because they destroy health and freedom; they destroy man.

Mrs. DIALLO (Senegal) (interpretation from French): The competence and effectiveness with which Mr. Garba conducted the work of the forty-fourth session of the General Assembly and the sixteenth special session, on apartheid, guarantee that under his leadership this special session will lead to the adoption of concrete, co-ordinated measures capable of contributing to the eradication of the scourge of drugs.

(Mrs. Diallo, Senegal)

Once again I extend the sincere congratulations of the delegation of Senegal.

I wish also once again to assure Mr. Javier Pérez de Cuéllar, Secretary-General of our Organization, of Senegal's appreciation of the work already done in the fight against drug trafficking, as well as of his tireless efforts in the service of international peace and security.

Finally, I am pleased to express my delegation's gratitude to the Preparatory Committee of the Whole which, under the dynamic chairmanship of Ambassador Peter Hohenfellner, Permanent Representative of Austria, made a quality contribution to our work.

Like the special session on apartheid which preceded it, this seventeenth special session is most timely, for the scourge of drugs, with all its ramifications, strikes at the very heart of our societies notwithstanding the courageous struggle waged by many countries, including Colombia, whose example is indeed inspiring in many ways.

As a cardinal and entry point of Africa, Senegal, directly following its accession to independence, realized that its strategic location entailed the risk of becoming a centre from which Europe, America and Asia could easily be supplied by way of illicit trafficking in drugs and psychotropic substances.

Aware of the danger inherent in the traffic and abuse of drugs, and of the need for a genuine policy to counter this danger that would be based on early-warning machinery, severe repression and rigorous treatment, the Senegalese authorities decided resolutely to attack this disturbing question. Hence, in addition to the adoption of legislation and regulations, Senegal in 1965 set up a National Drug Commission charged with the task of defining a national policy, co-ordinating action and working out measures capable of checking the spread of this evil.

(Mrs. Diallo, Senegal)

In this framework, the Senegalese National Commission worked out a battle strategy which, on a global scale, would deal not only with problems of prevention, control of supply and suppression of trafficking but also those of treatment and rehabilitation of drug addicts.

These various activities are being carried out with the active co-operation of the national customs services and the police, which, in particular, provide special units along the border and brigades in the regional capitals.

This national strategy, financed by internal resources and international contributions, is based on such structures as the national fund to combat drugs, the departmental committees against drug addiction, orientation and information centres and treatment and care sectors for drug addicts.

However, notwithstanding the scope of the means that were adopted and the stringency of repression, surveillance and control measures have fallen short of what is now required owing to the rapid spread of the scourage.

In my country, it so happens that the average harvest of a family of six working on the main cash crop - peanuts - is one tonne per annum, which brings such a family approximately \$230. If that family were to engage in the clandestine cultivation of cannabis, it could multiply its annual income 100 times through the sale of one tonne of Indian hemp, which would bring it \$23,000.

These figures need no comment. They show quite clearly the incentive to produce drugs and the fragility of the wall separating the honest peasant from the producer of cannabis.

Briefly speaking, those are some disturbing aspects of the drug problem in my country, which has very quickly become aware of the important role international co-operation can play, without which there is no way anyone can defeat this scourge of modern times.

(Mrs. Diallo, Senegal)

Indeed, while States can, on their one, work out national strategies, take adequate legislative action and ensure enforcement within their respective territories, the fact remains that in order to eradicate the scourge of drugs collective co-ordinated efforts are required, both regionally and internationally. It is within that framework that a summit conference was held recently in Cartagena and that the United Kingdom authorities proposed an international conference on reducing demand for drugs, to be convened in London in April 1990.

As a party to all international conventions on drugs and psychotropic substances, Senegal - one of the five countries that ratified the Convention of 19 December 1988 - attaches special importance to the speedy implementation of international legal instruments. That is why we earnestly hope that the 1988 Vienna Convention will soon come into force, as a result of its being ratified by at least 20 States, and that at least provisionally some of its measures will be implemented in the meantime. That is also why my delegation welcomes the convening of this special session, one of whose fundamental goals is the search for better ways of improving international co-operation by the systematic exchange of information, the strengthening of the struggle against money laundering and the complete exchange of information through adequate liaison.

No one doubts that illicit trafficking in drugs promotes corruption, creates fear, undermines economic, social and political institutions and seriously jeopardizes the security of States. It is a fact that there are close links between the illegal arms and drug traffic and terrorism, which endanger the very existence of our societies.

The drugs phenomenon has been spreading relentlessly, and our response must be collective. In the framework of concerted international co-operation, frontiers and different national legislations should no longer impede repression,

(Mrs. Diallo, Senegal)

identification and the freezing and confiscation of money made from drug trafficking.

In this area, as in many others, it is fitting that we should welcome the role being played by the United Nations, whose co-operation with Member States has already resulted in identifying the deeply rooted causes - social, economic or psychological - of drug abuse and in the creation of international machinery for co-operation.

(Mrs. Diallo, Senegal)

The International Conference on Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking was held in Vienna in 1987 under the aegis of the United Nations. That meeting led to a clear expression of the political determination of nations to fight against the threat of drugs and provided States with a Comprehensive Multidisciplinary Outline for their activities in this area. In the spirit of Vienna, the General Assembly has kept the question of drugs on its agenda, and has adopted a number of resolutions on the subject at every regular session.

At the political and legal levels, it would seem that the international community has sufficient means to undertake successfully a veritable crusade against the drug abuse and trafficking. However, the implementation of an adequate international policy against drugs requires the mobilization of very significant financial, material and human resources. At the same time, we must take into account the socio-economic situations in most of the countries concerned. In this connection, we must stress that in the Senegalese national strategy pride of place has been given to non-governmental organizations and social groups as a means of heightening awareness, something which has acquired vital importance.

In my delegation's opinion, the continuing deterioration of the economic situation is one of the key reasons why certain people in a number of countries of the third world continue to engage in the illicit growing of drugs. It is absolutely necessary that we put integrated rural development programmes into effect as speedily as possible and that producers get better prices for basic commodities.

To make it possible for the United Nations to play the crucial role that it should be playing in the intensification of the struggle against drug trafficking, it is necessary that this international institution be given exceptional financial means. The United Nations Fund for the Drug Abuse Control could, as part of

(Mrs. Diallo, Senegal)

regional and subregional assistance plans, promote, inter alia, the provision of specialized services in countries where such services are not available. In addition, the supervisory structures of the United Nations - in particular, the Commission on Narcotic Drugs - must be made more effective. Here we should like to recall the request made by the Commission that a service be set up at the headquarters of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa to co-ordinate and promote the struggle against drugs. To developing countries it is necessary that training programmes for liaison agents be strengthened.

Even as we meet, drug traffickers are carrying on their criminal activities. We must use this important session as a means of undertaking co-ordinated and decisive action to eradicate the scourge of drugs. From our relentless struggle against this godless and lawless enemy with neither hearth nor home, there will emerge, for the benefit of present and future generations, hopes for a brighter future, a world free from the horror, violence and depravity caused by drugs.

Mr. MICU (Romania): I am deeply honoured to express to Mr. Garba the respectful congratulations of the Romanian delegation on his assumption of the presidency of the General Assembly at this most important special session. I take this opportunity also to pay tribute to the distinguished Secretary-General for all that he has done to focus the attention of the world community on the growing threat that drug abuse poses to the very fibre of modern society.

The delegation of Romania agrees entirely with all those who are convinced that the problem under consideration at this session is a very serious one. The rapidly growing production of, illicit trafficking in, and demand for, drugs have become a matter of major concern to all countries. The consequences of drug abuse are reflected in a deepening erosion of the social structure in many countries. And the areas affected by this plague are widening fast. As the main consumers of drugs are young people, only much later will it be possible to establish the exact

(Mr. Micu, Romania)

dimensions of the damage being done. Therefore the task being undertaken at this session is an investment towards preventing the physical and moral decay of future generations.

The positions presented from this rostrum yesterday and today suggest that there is a convergence or similarity of views on the basic parameters of the problem of drug abuse. There is no disagreement about the fact that it is a problem of great magnitude and complexity, that it has acquired global dimensions, and that its solution requires effective joint action by all States.

There is a clear general awareness of the serious threat that drug abuse poses for the individual, for the family and for society in all countries, as well as of the urgency of the need to cope with it before it is too late. There is wide agreement about the fact that a solution to the problem of drug abuse will not be feasible if we focus on production or consumption alone. The solution must be sought in joint action on both supply and demand, taking fully into account the political, economic, cultural and social ramifications of the problem.

It is obviously insufficient to fight the symptoms. We must go to the roots of the illness; we must deal with the motivation for the growth in drug production and with the causes of the increase in demand. One of the main motivations for production is certainly the great profit that it provides. The causes of the growth in demand for drugs are closely associated with the social conditions of modern society. Insufficient education, lack of full understanding of the catastrophic long-term implications of drug abuse, unemployment and poverty in general are all factors favouring drug traffickers.

Finding effective solutions to the complex problem of drug abuse is therefore the collective responsibility of all nations. Such a common approach leads to the general conclusion that the United Nations is the logical framework within which to cope with this question at the global level, to encourage measures at the regional

(Mr. Micu, Romania)

and subregional levels, and to facilitate action at the national level. On the basis of common or similar positions and approaches, we believe that there is a real chance that this special session, by producing concrete results, can become a turning-point in the international community's difficult struggle against drug abuse. We are duty-bound not to miss this opportunity.

Romania, which is located in a sensitive drug-transit area, has made sustained efforts to prevent illicit drug trafficking in or through its territory. To achieve this goal, it has acted in several directions.

(Mr. Micu, Romania)

The production of drugs and psychotropic substances for medical purposes takes place in State-owned factories. This allows for the effective control of such production. Since domestic production cannot entirely satisfy the needs of the country, Romania relies on the import of some drugs and psychotropic substances, observing, of course, international norms and regulations.

The concerns of the country to renounce the production of substances that create drug dependence have been reflected in two important actions. Research has been carried out for a number of years to obtain original analgesic substances as substitutes for morphine, thus eliminating a source of drug addiction. The results achieved so far are quite encouraging. At the same time, for several years research has been conducted to adapt the *Papaver bracteatum* plant, which has the advantage of not being able to be used to stimulate drug addiction, to the Romanian climate.

The supply of drugs has been and remains limited in Romania. Perhaps the changes which are going to take place in the economic life of the country may favour a certain increase in this supply. Another factor which might influence the drug supply could be related to the expected increase of international tourism. If that were to take place, additional appropriate protective measures on the part of Romanian authorities would be necessary to cope with that problem.

So far the demand for drugs has been insignificant in Romania. Only a small number of cases of drug addiction has so far been recorded, with most of them occurring as a result of medical treatment. With respect to psychotropic substances, they can be obtained from drug stores only with a medical prescription. Particular attention has been given to such substances within the framework of the activity of drug monitoring so as to detect and prevent drug addiction.

(Mr. Micu, Romania)

Demand for cocaine to be used for local anaesthesia had been considerable in my country. During the 1970s, Romania was one of the important consumers of that drug. The situation came to the attention of the United Nations Commission on Narcotic Drugs, which prompted the national health authorities to take measures for the radical reduction of such consumption. As a result, the use of cocaine has been reduced to levels comparable with those of other countries.

Particular emphasis has been placed on preventive education of the population, and especially of the youth, as a means of keeping the drug demand as low as possible.

Drug trafficking during the last two decades has tended to increase, owing to the fact that Romania is situated on one of the major transit routes for drugs, mainly from the Middle East to Western Europe. Attempts by traffickers to carry drugs into or through the territory of my country have in many instances been foiled, which has led to a significant decrease of that traffic in the area. Romanian authorities have constructively co-operated in that activity with the respective authorities of the neighbouring countries. Within the framework of the expanding Balkan co-operation, it is my country's firm intention actively to pursue the goal undertaken at the 1988 Belgrade Conference of foreign ministers of the Balkan countries to hold regular meetings of representatives of specialized agencies for the struggle against terrorism, the illegal arms trade and trafficking in narcotic drugs.

In the same spirit, we welcome the recommendation of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, at the initiative of Austria, to establish a European Heads of National Law Enforcement Agencies (HONLEA) enabling all European nations, including Romania, to exchange experience and work closely together in drug related matters.

(Mr. Micu, Romania)

Romania co-operates with the United Nations Commission on Narcotic Drugs, as well as with INTERPOL, and intends to intensify such co-operation in the future. It is our belief that, in addition to multilateral co-operation on drug control, the development of bilateral co-operation on specific aspects of this problem is of considerable importance. In our view, it would be useful to widen the exchange of documents and information and to organize international meetings and seminars on subjects of interest in the struggle against drugs. In Romania we have a well-defined national legal framework which ensures the effective surveillance of all problems relating to drugs and psychotropic substances.

With respect to the international legal framework, the former Romanian régime ratified only the 1961 Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs. I should like to point out, however, that although Romania is not yet a party to the 1971 Convention on Psychotropic Substances the Romanian authorities concerned have complied with all the provisions of that Convention. It is our firm intention to take the necessary steps to ratify in the near future the 1971 Convention on Psychotropic Substances and the 1988 United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances.

Before concluding my remarks on the subject under consideration, I wish to reaffirm the strong commitment of the new, free Romania to the purposes and principles of the United Nations. After having liberated themselves, through a great people's revolution, from the most despotic régime in the centuries-long history of the country, the Romanian people have embarked upon the path towards genuine freedom and democracy. That cruel régime, which was overthrown at the price of great losses and human sacrifice, had isolated Romania from Europe, from the world and from the United Nations. Now all Romanians are proud that their

(Mr. Micu, Romania)

country is back - back in Europe, back in the world and back in the United Nations. Romania has again become a reliable partner in joint efforts to promote peace, security, co-operation and better understanding among all nations.

A final word: I wish to express our deep gratitude for the generous manifestations of sympathy, solidarity and humanitarian assistance received from governments, international organizations and public opinion everywhere, in support of the endeavours of the Romanian people to live in dignity, freedom and democracy.

Mr. MANIKAS (Greece): I wish at the outset to extend, on behalf of my Government, our warm congratulations to Mr. Garba on his election as President of the General Assembly at this important special session. His experience and diplomatic skills are guarantees that he will successfully discharge the duties with which he has been entrusted. I wish also to express our deep appreciation to the Chairman of the Preparatory Committee, Ambassador Hohenfellner of Austria, and to the other members of the Bureau for having efficiently prepared this session, which is a guarantee of its success.

(Mr. Manikas, Greece)

The Minister for Justice of Ireland spoke yesterday on behalf of the European community and its member States. Since my Government fully agrees with the views he expressed, I will not repeat the positions and initiatives of the European Community, in the formulation of which Greece actively participates.

In a world in which wars and regional conflicts are gradually being brought under control or, as it seems, becoming more scarce, the United Nations is called upon to confront this present scourge. Its threat disregards borders, does not discriminate among social classes and undermines the foundations of all societies.

The problem facing us today is not one solely concerned with the illicit production of, trafficking in and marketing of drugs, or with money laundering. It is a much more complex problem, in which the whole range of drug production and trafficking is linked with violence and, in particular, with terrorism and the illegal-arms trade.

Another facet of the problem is that it poses a direct challenge to democracy and civilization. Ancient Greek philosophy teaches us that democracy and civilization reserve the central place in their objectives to the individual. The human being has today become the target of a complex threat posed by narcotics, terrorism and violence. That threat should be assessed in its true dimensions, for it aims primarily at the future and the hopes of humanity, at today's youth, at our own children. It is my belief that those who deal in the illicit production, marketing and trafficking of drugs cannot claim to be part of human civilization.

Thus, examine this problem in the belief that each State, both separately and as part of the international community as a whole, must become aware of the dimensions of the threat, which cannot be contained by national measures alone. Only through a concerted international crusade can we deal effectively with the drug problem in all its facets. It is the opinion of the Greek Government that law-enforcement measures in the narrow sense are not enough. It is necessary to

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launch an information campaign on an international scale to prevent the spread of this scourge, in particular among the young, and to secure the protection, treatment and reintegration into society of those affected.

The rise in the demand for narcotics and other psychotropic substances has created complex economic problems in producer countries. We therefore consider that measures should be adopted to reduce demand and to replace the production of drugs in the countries of origin with other forms of economic activity.

Greece does not face the problem of drugs to the same extent as do other countries. However, we are fully aware of the need to remain vigilant against the lurking danger, if for no other reason than because of Greece's geographical position.

The development of economic and trade relations between Western European countries and the Middle East has resulted in an increase in the importance of the so-called Balkan route of drug trafficking. The land and maritime navigation lanes that constitute that route border the area under Greek control. That is why special services of the Greek Ministries of Public Order, Finance and Merchant Marine have been entrusted with fighting the illicit trafficking in narcotic drugs. Their co-ordination is supervised by the Interministerial Co-ordinating Body. Our law-enforcement authorities have been highly successful in confiscating substantial quantities of drugs during the past decade.

In the international sphere the Greek Government is enlarging its co-operation at both the bilateral and regional levels. At the bilateral level we have concluded a broad range of agreements and continue to develop co-operation with other interested countries. At the regional level we participate in all initiatives and efforts being taken by the European Community and countries associated with it. Further, we are co-operating with the countries that form the Club of Five, at whose initiative a meeting is soon to be held in Italy to examine

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problems related to the Balkan route of drug trafficking. Greece will certainly participate in the world ministerial summit meeting to be held at London next April. We also support common efforts within the framework of co-operation among Balkan countries against the drug problem and have taken initiatives to that effect.

I should like to take this opportunity to state that, in addition to a broad range of domestic legislation, Greece has adhered to the legal instruments governing the world-wide drug-control system, having ratified the 1961 Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs, as amended by the 1972 Protocol, and the 1971 Convention on Psychotropic Substances. Today, I have the pleasure to announce that in the near future we intend to ratify the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988, which was signed by my country on 23 February 1989.

In conclusion, I should like to emphasize that this special session and the texts that will be adopted - namely, the political declaration and the global programme of action - will mark the beginning of a dynamic struggle, in the last resort, to save democracy, civilization and humanity from this modern scourge.

Mr. de MARCO (Malta): Two and a half years ago the General Assembly decided to convene the International Conference on Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking as "an expression of the political will of nations to combat the drug menace." The theme of the 1987 Vienna Conference - "Yes to Life, No to Drugs" - is once again being echoed at this special session of the Assembly, where together, as Member States of this great Organization, we are to decide on how to co-ordinate efforts against illicit production and supply of, demand for, trafficking in and distribution of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances.*

* Mr. Adouki (Congo), Vice-President, took the Chair.

(Mr. de Marco, Malta)

Experience has already shown that our task is not an easy one. Many speakers have described the great difficulty of overcoming this scourge, which is ruining not only the lives of individuals but also whole communities of our society. With an estimated 50 million people worldwide using illicit drugs, in the words used by Secretary-General Perez de Cuellar in his opening statement to this special session:

"Drug abuse is now right at the top of the list of priorities requiring urgent attention from the international community. It is by its nature truly international, and it demands a co-ordinated international response." (A/S-17/PV.1, p. 9)

It is a known fact that this enormous increase in drug use has lent itself to a more dramatic increase in drug trafficking. It has been calculated that the global value of the traffic in illicit drugs is now greater than that of the trade in oil and second only to the arms trade. Drug dealing has turned into a multi-billion-dollar industry. This phenomenon does not have any border or frontier. No country is spared. Whether big or small, rich or poor, all segments of society are afflicted. Indeed, the drug-abuse situation has continued to deteriorate in many parts of the world. Drug abuse has spread to all social strata and age groups, keeping its predominant hold among youth. This situation has become a fertile ground for widespread illicit trafficking in drugs, with consequences that are grave - indeed, of alarming proportions. In turn, the increasingly sophisticated networks for producing and distributing illegal drugs are resulting in a higher level of criminal activity and seriously undermining the international drug-control system.

Control of narcotic drugs has been a world concern ever since the first international conference on the subject was held in Shanghai in 1909. Our predecessors' efforts in regard to an international control system have been built

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up step by step, beginning in 1920 under the auspices of the League of Nations and since 1946 by the United Nations.

Today, more than ever before, the drug problem needs to be tackled in a more direct and co-ordinated manner. The prevention and reduction of demand, control of supply, suppression of illicit trafficking, and treatment and rehabilitation are four areas, which cannot be considered in isolation. The 1987 Vienna drug Conference was able to reach agreement on a comprehensive outline of recommendations to respond to the drug threat. The Conference unanimously endorsed a manual of practical actions designed to be taken on all facets of drug abuse and illicit trafficking. The Comprehensive Multidisciplinary Outline has made a large contribution to what have been called "counter-offensives of another dimension". Precisely, the events occurring in drug-related activities demand that these counter-offensives acquire increased efficacy and strength so that a more dynamic approach can be taken at the national and international levels to combat drug abuse and trafficking.

While efforts to combat the drug threat at the national level are without doubt an important element in generating awareness of the international drug menace, it is equally important that international co-operation be enhanced in order to cope with widespread and intensified illicit drug trafficking. Crucial to this strategy is the education of our societies to face the dangers of drug abuse, and the strengthening of the international system of control of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances. Equally important is the identification of substitute crops and the provision of material assistance for efforts to eliminate illegal drug cultivation and create better alternative income activities. The exchange of timely information on criminal activities of traffickers is indispensable. Finally, it is of fundamental importance that the treatment and rehabilitation of drug addicts be given priority in this overall strategy.

(Mr. de Marco, Malta)

Although a drug-free life in today's circumstances may be difficult to achieve, we have to face the realities of the situation and take every action to attenuate the dark side of society afflicted by drugs.

In Malta the drug problem is very real. We have recognized the seriousness of the situation and have taken appropriate remedial measures. The Government of Malta is developing a comprehensive strategy for combating drug abuse, consisting in making enforcement more effective; ensuring better control at port of entry; updating laws within the context of international conventions; developing prevention measures; improving treatment and rehabilitation and social support structures; and co-operating through bilateral or multilateral agreements or arrangements to strengthen the infrastructure needed for effective control and prevention of illicit trafficking through Malta.

In pursuance of that strategy, in August 1988 the Government of Malta set up its own structures for the purpose of co-ordinating the work involved in combating drug abuse and illicit trafficking. This co-ordinating work has already borne fruit. The Inter-Ministerial Committee set up under my chairmanship has succeeded in launching a programme in demand-reduction; a Chemical Abuse Unit has been set up within the Education Department aimed at giving assistance to and establishing a constant information programme for pupils or students and their parents. Life-skill programmes have been introduced in many schools, while anti-drug campaigns through the mass media and other specialized prevention campaigns, such as those at the workplace, have been embarked upon.

Malta's drug laws essentially conform with the 1961 Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs, as subsequently amended, and the 1971 Convention on Psychotropic Substances. I am pleased to announce that Malta will be depositing the instrument of accession to the 1961 and 1971 Conventions during this special session of the General Assembly. It is also relevant to point out that although Malta was not a

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party to these two Conventions it has complied fully with the reporting requirements laid down in them. With a view to Malta's accession to the 1988 Convention, we are currently examining relevant amendments to existing legislation. However, it is pertinent to point out that as long ago as 1986 the Maltese Parliament approved a number of amendments to its legislation which foresaw some of the principal provisions of the 1988 Vienna Convention.

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Law enforcement and the treatment of addicts are two crucial areas to which the Maltese Government is giving priority. The police anti-drug squad has been considerably strengthened, and a customs-authority drug squad has been set up. Co-operation between the police and customs authorities has led to a considerable number of seizures of cannabis and heroin being brought in by couriers seeking to use Malta's international airport.

On the treatment side, round-the-clock services at the general hospital's detoxification centre have been ameliorated. A clinic with the necessary facilities is being set up at the civil prisons, where more than 35 per cent of the inmates have drug-related problems; plans for a drug-dependence unit for long-term detoxification are in hand. Non-medical treatment is provided by CARITAS at a day rehabilitation centre and, since 1989, in a residential community set up on property granted to CARITAS by the Government following a unanimous resolution in Parliament. Addicts undergoing treatment do not forfeit any social or sickness benefits to which they may be entitled, and do not lose their placement in the employment register.

Malta's commitment to international co-operation in this field and to the struggle against the drug problem is amply demonstrated by its membership in INTERPOL, the Customs Co-operation Council and the Pompidou Group. Malta participates actively in several international meetings and conferences, including sessions of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs.

Future international action has to be based on confidence-building measures. In the sphere of disarmament much progress has been achieved. What is needed now is to disarm the drug trade in its aspects of abuse and illegality. Like the rest of the international community, we are very disturbed and perturbed by the linkage existing between the world's two most destructive forces: narcotics trafficking

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and terrorism. Sometimes drug trafficking finances terrorism; at other times terrorists assure sources of supply for the narcotics dealers. For a country like Malta, international co-operation is essential in combating drug abuse, which undermines the fabric of our modern society.

As one of the sponsors of resolution 44/16, Malta will continue to participate in measures which will contribute to the eradication of illicit production, supply, demand, trafficking and distribution of narcotics and psychotropic substances. We realize that this is a struggle which cannot be carried out by individual countries, least of all by small countries with limited economic, human and legal resources. This is an exercise where joint efforts must be made to create and strengthen the operating methods of national and international law enforcement bodies.

We strongly believe that technical and financial assistance should be placed at the disposal of national, regional and international organizations in the promotion of measures to combat illicit trafficking in drugs. The clear determination of the international community to address this serious global threat must be marked by a commitment to make available substantial financial and technical resources to enable the various drug-control mandates to be implemented more effectively. In that respect, the problems of transit countries, the majority of which are developing countries, are being exacerbated by drug trafficking. This situation is imposing a very heavy burden on their law enforcement machinery, forcing them to divert scarce resources from pressing developmental needs.

Malta is no exception. Indeed, our geographical location may offer a strategic attraction to those involved in drug trafficking. For our part, we have been able to keep the situation under control. However, in order to maintain the momentum Malta needs more technical assistance, particularly in the field of

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surveillance, in information sharing and in advisory services, in order to strengthen its capability to combat illicit drug trafficking.

Here I must not fail to mention the very valid role of non-governmental organizations in the fight against drug abuse and illicit trafficking. Their activities and contributions in this sphere are to be lauded and fully supported.

Malta pledges its full support to the concerted efforts being made by the United Nations to uphold the dignity of the human being against the scourge of drug abuse and illicit trafficking. My Government pledges its unreserved commitment to a society that can live without the fear of seeing its population, particularly its young generations, in bondage to a helpless existence begetting crime and death.

Ours is a commitment to our youth to live and to be. We are here to deliberate as representatives of our countries. We return home to act as citizens of the world.

Mr. MAVROMMATIS (Cyprus): I wish at the outset to convey my warm congratulations and best wishes to Ambassador Garba on his election as President of the General Assembly at its seventeenth special session. We are certain that, with the able assistance of his Bureau, he will preside with distinction over our consideration of the important question of international co-operation against the illicit production, supply, demand, trafficking and distribution of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances. Our congratulations and best wishes go also to the other Assembly officers.

The convening of this special session underlines the magnitude and complexity of the problem of narcotic drugs in its multiple manifestations, which the entire international community is confronting. It is also a decisive, and long overdue, milestone now that the world has finally accepted that individual States are no longer in a position to deal with this terrible scourge alone, and that concerted, collective and sustained action is a global commitment.

(Mr. Mavrommatis, Cyprus)

The dimensions and gravity of this problem were eloquently expressed by the Secretary-General - whom we wish to congratulate on his initiatives - in his most relevant report on the work of the Organization to the General Assembly at its forty-fourth session, only a few months ago, when he said that

"Illicit use and traffic of drugs is now recognized as a social plague afflicting both developed and developing countries. Although efforts to combat this scourge have intensified in recent years, estimates suggest that the monetary value of drug trafficking has recently surpassed that of international trade in oil and is second only to the arms trade. It is a chastening observation that humanity is so deeply mired in the commerce of degradation and death." (A/44/1, p. 23)

(Mr. Mavrommatis, Cyprus)

We are all aware by now that drug trafficking and related criminal activities have reached such a level that they are capable of undermining the economies of States, as well as threatening even their stability, national security and sovereignty.

At this point I feel it is only proper to pay tribute to President Virgilio Barco and the Colombian Government for the inspiring determination with which they have confronted the merciless and callous terrorist activities of the international drug traffickers, even in the face of tragic losses in human lives and devastatingly high social and economic cost.

Only a few short years ago the prevailing attitude in my own country, Cyprus, with regard to illicit drugs was one of self-confidence in that this was an alien problem, a remote and almost irrelevant danger. Certainly this is not the case any longer, and my Government is increasingly concerned about the problem of drug abuse and drug trafficking. Cyprus has, regrettably, found itself at the crossroads of heavy drug trafficking, and it is being used as a transit station by the international drug smugglers.

With regard to drug abuse, this problem is still contained at a low level, but we cannot overlook the real possibility that, if we do not take the correct preventive measures, it may escalate to an alarming degree. With a population of approximately 650,000 and the number of tourists who visit our country well exceeding one million annually, the potential for an increase in drug abuse among our youth is very real.

My Government therefore takes a very serious view of drug offences, and this is reflected in the successive amendments to our drug legislation in order to make it more effective, in the severe sentences passed by the courts against illicit drug offenders found guilty, and in the impressive achievements of our police and

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customs authorities in foiling numerous attempts to use Cyprus as a transit station for the trafficking of narcotic drugs to other countries.

We are very sensitive in keeping abreast of the measures taken by Governments combating drug abuse and drug trafficking, as well as in honouring our obligations to the international community by acceding to and ratifying the various conventions for the control and suppression of narcotic drugs. Cyprus is a signatory to the 1988 United Nations Convention against Illicit Trafficking in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, and we are proceeding rapidly with its ratification.

Furthermore, the Drug Squad of the Cyprus Police is constantly providing Interpol with valuable information, and it co-operates closely with other foreign drug agencies. It would not be an exaggeration to note that numerous international successes have been achieved both in Cyprus and elsewhere as a result of this co-operation.

At the same time, the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Cyprus has set up a special committee for the study of the efficiency of our legislation, with particular attention to certain aspects such as the tracing of illicit proceeds, the adequacy of penalties, matters connected with extradition and other relevant issues.

Moreover, the President of Cyprus, Mr. Vassiliou, announced recently that the Government intends to set up a representative national drug committee under his personal chairmanship, which will contribute towards the formulation and implementation of our national policy in confronting the drug problem and all its ramifications. My Government is also favourably studying the request for the establishment of a regional drug information exchange centre in Cyprus in collaboration with Interpol, following the support and favourable reaction this proposal has received from most, if not nearly all, interested countries.

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I must, however, mention the fact that our efforts to combat drug trafficking all over the territory of the Republic of Cyprus are being impeded by the fact that part of Cyprus is still under occupation.

I have mentioned the foregoing with regard to my country's activities in order to demonstrate clearly and unequivocally our resolve and determination to counter the ominous threat of illicit drugs and to prevent Cyprus from becoming either a drug consuming or a transit State.

We all agree, of course, that in order to be successful action at the national level must be supported and complemented by action at the regional and international levels. This special session provides us with the opportunity to focus on the importance of compliance with, and effective implementation of, the international drug control treaties and programmes on which agreement has been reached. Furthermore we expect that the Global Programme of Action to be adopted at this special session will contain concrete, comprehensive and long-term objectives, equal consideration being given to issues involving both supply and demand.

It is pertinent to stress the collective responsibility of both drug-producing and drug-consuming countries in dealing with the problem of drug abuse and illicit trafficking. In this respect we note with satisfaction the importance of the summit meeting between the Presidents of Colombia, Bolivia, Peru and the United States that took place last week in Cartagena, Colombia.

Similarly we look forward to the World Ministerial Summit to Reduce Demand for Drugs and to Combat the Cocaine Threat, which is to be held in London from 9 to 11 April 1990, in the expectation that it will intensify the international commitment to combat the scourge of narcotic drugs. These activities, important and useful as they may be, enhance and complement, rather than replace, the central

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role of the United Nations in this protracted fight. We all recognize the primary importance of the actions carried out by the United Nations drug control units as well as the need for co-ordination of all drug related activities in the United Nations system. Their mandate is far from being fulfilled, and it is our task to find ways and means for the provision of additional financial and human resources to them, even if that will mean the reallocation of resources within the United Nations budget. That would definitely reflect the priority that we, the Member States, attach to drug abuse programmes.

The notion of national sovereignty is the corner-stone of this Organization. As the cause of world peace rapidly gains ground with the solution of certain international problems, we, a community of nations, find ourselves under attack from a multinational criminal network that respects neither our sovereignty nor our frontiers or law. We are therefore obliged to consider seriously the links between illicit drug trafficking and international terrorism, subversive activities and organized crime, which threaten the stability and security of our Governments.

If we cannot act resolutely together in the face of this menace, then we will be aiding by default the unrestrained growth in the use of drugs and the spread of violence and the social decay they generate.

Mr. BENCHEIKH (Morocco) (interpretation from French): On behalf of the delegation of the Kingdom of Morocco, I should like to associate myself with the congratulations extended to Mr. Garba by all my colleagues who spoke before me on his election to the presidency of the General Assembly at the current special session. I should also like to congratulate the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Perez de Cuellar, for the speed with which he has prepared the convening of this special session, which attests to the will of our Organization to draw up a global strategy in the fight against drugs.

The debates at the forty-fourth session of the General Assembly have clearly brought to light the negative consequences resulting from the activities of drug traffickers, just as they have shown that only yet more active international solidarity can stop that scourge.

During that session, the General Assembly adopted important resolutions aimed at the adoption of a political declaration and a global programme of action against the production, supply, demand, traffic and illegal distribution of drugs and psychotropic substances. That declaration and that programme are designed to expand and strengthen international co-operation at all levels.

Future action, which will be discussed at this special session, will doubtless allow us to make progress against drug addiction and illicit trafficking. Morocco, aware of the seriousness of the individual and social consequences of drug abuse, very early joined the international campaign against drugs and has made great efforts in various fields to contribute to eliminating the supply of narcotics and curbing demand.

With regard to legislation, my country, under its international obligations, has taken significant action and now has available a rather full legislative array of laws that severely punish drug trafficking. A national commission on the struggle against drug abuse was established as early as 1977, with the mandate

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to draw up, study, and propose all appropriate measures aimed at preventing illicit drug traffic and to see to the application of those international conventions to which Morocco is a party.

We have also begun the establishment of an integrated pilot programme for effective struggle aimed at promoting substitute crops, socio-economic development and the struggle against illicit drug trafficking. That programme could not have come to light without the effective assistance of the United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control and the United Nations Development Programme, and here I should like to express our gratitude for their most valuable assistance.

On the regional level, Morocco actively participated in the work of various conferences and meetings on the Arab, African and Islamic levels, which all dealt with the various aspects of drug abuse and illicit trafficking. Aware, too, of the extreme importance of bilateral co-operation, Morocco also concluded agreements with numerous countries, with the United States in particular, certain European countries, as well as the European Economic Communities Commission.

The latter is now making a valuable contribution to our country towards implementing a national programme to combat drug addiction, including training of qualified personnel, preventive measures, the establishment of centres for the reception, treatment and rehabilitation of addicts.

The facts show more than ever that the drug problem is a complex one. As far as production is concerned, it should be stressed that it is above all linked to underdevelopment, and it is not enough to promote crop substitution if such crops do not have access to markets or are not sufficiently profitable.

In this respect, drug traffickers who try to make peasants cultivate illicit drugs promise them far more substantive gain than that derived from traditional crops. Moreover, it has become quite clear that the fall in world prices for commodities - the primary resources of the developing countries - exposes the

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economies of those countries, be they producers or not, to much easier domination by the drug-trafficking cartels.

The implementation and strengthening of means of action to struggle against drug addiction require from the producer and transit countries, which are for the most part developing countries, sometimes superhuman efforts that endanger vital development strategies and policies for improving the often very precarious standard of living of their populations. The economic situation of those countries should be seriously taken into consideration within the framework of both bilateral and multilateral co-operation. The assistance they have been given to this point seems ludicrous when compared with the sacrifices that are demanded of them.

Hence, the developed countries must realize that the struggle cannot be won if they do not come to the aid of the producer countries, which must face very difficult economic realities. Curbing protectionism, reducing debt and stabilizing commodity markets are fundamental in that regard.

The aid given those countries to implement plans for reconversion and for socio-economic development must be based on the study of the specific needs and characteristics of the regions involved so as to make crop growers accept that reconversion in return for reasonable income. The developing countries, backed by that assistance, must contribute to the success of the process and commit themselves to eliminating those crops once and for all.

This is a struggle which, to various degrees, involves everyone, and its outcome will depend on the joint efforts of the entire international community. The close relationship between supply and demand, as well as the responsibility shared within the framework of a global approach, have been universally recognized. In this connection, we wish to congratulate the United Kingdom for its initiative to convene in London this year an international conference on illicit

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drugs designed specifically to study the means whereby to reduce supply and demand. We also hail the holding of the recent regional summit in Cartagena, where important measures were taken to strengthen the anti-drug struggle, including the proposal to convene in 1991 a high-level conference of producer and consumer countries.

We also welcome the proposals for the United Nations system to give high priority to the problem of narcotics and to be the focal point for all global policies aimed at carrying out action against drugs on the national, regional and international levels.

We should note here that for many years now the United Nations has dealt with social problems or those affecting human rights. Unfortunately, progress has so far been relatively modest, since every measure that has been put forward has come up against the financial restrictions seriously afflicting our Organization. Hence it is urgent that this situation be remedied and that the relevant bodies be given the means they need to accomplish their mission, just as it is necessary to combine the United Nations bodies dealing with the problem into one major, and powerful body.

The conventions adopted since 1961 should be given maximum support through ratification, and national legislation should be adapted to them. Once again, emphasis should be placed on the importance of control of illicit production and trafficking in substances similar to those already placed under control, as well as trade in precursors and chemical products that can be used in the production of drugs and psychotropic substances. Particular attention should also be given to the legal prescribing of psychotropic substances. Some statistics show that they are becoming a source of concern and are often the cause of drug dependencies which are often not recognized but which affect a relatively large sector of the population.

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The international community's struggle against drugs should not make us forget that the enormous sums acquired by drug traffickers through attacks, assassinations, threats and terroristic acts continue to be laundered with impunity.

Measures must be agreed and implemented to investigate, seek out and punish those responsible for laundering these ill-gotten gains. Here the idea of the creation of an international data bank to combat the laundering of money made from the drug trafficking must be encouraged.

Given the magnitude of the evermore alarming phenomenon of drug abuse, the international community must more than ever before mobilize with a view to combating the harmful effects this scourge is having on the future of all mankind.

We know that the total eradication of this scourge is a long-term undertaking. Drug addiction, which spares no society, is unfortunately one more aspect of all the other ills affecting the entire developing world - poverty, ignorance, famine, unemployment and the injustices of a world suffering under an extremely negative economic climate.

Thus we must pool our efforts and expand to the maximum the scope of our co-operation, for that is our duty to all mankind, which aspires to peace, security and a future free from suffering, terror and the tyranny of drug cartels.

In the struggle against drugs we insist once again on the need to strengthen the means for action by the United Nations system, as well as to promote international co-operation in this field for the benefit of all countries involved. Suppression must be stepped up and the machinery of illicit trafficking must be dismantled, while stressing prevention, education, treatment and rehabilitation, so as to preserve the health of our populations and bequeath to future generations a world in which the spectre of drugs and the moral decay flowing from this scourge will disappear once and for all.

Mr. WOHLFART (Luxembourg) (interpretation from French): Yesterday the Minister of Justice of Ireland spoke on behalf of the Twelve and expressed their views on the topic of this special session. Luxembourg endorses the contents of that statement, and hence I shall limit my intervention to some additional remarks on a subject that is close to my heart.

The problem of narcotic drugs in its different aspects has become a major challenge for our Governments, not only domestically but also at the international level, where co-operation among us all has become increasingly essential in order to fight that scourge. My Government therefore welcomes the convening of this special session of the General Assembly.

The scope of the matter leads us today - and this has been emphasized on several occasions - to the kind of co-operation among States that goes well beyond what we could have envisaged a few years ago. In fact, today we note that the immediate effects of this problem endangers the economy and even the democratic order of States.

Drug problems are certainly not new. However, for a long time States have simply attacked just one of its aspects. Today, however, we must pursue a global strategy - global because all States must participate; global because we must act at all stages of the drug cycle, that is, production, processing, transit, use and trafficking.

Luxembourg is a member of many institutions and international bodies dealing with this problem, such as the Pompidou Group in the framework of the Council of Europe and the Trevi Group within the European Communities. Efforts are also being made within the European Community in the control of precursors, development aid, especially with regard to crop substitution, and prevention of the use of the banking system for the purpose of laundering drug money - and I shall revert to the problem of money laundering at a later stage. With regard to the last point, my

(Mr. Wohlfart, Luxembourg)

country is also an active member of the finance action group established by the summit meeting of the most industrialized countries, held in Paris in July 1989, which has just given its conclusions. Finally, at the United Nations Luxembourg participates as an observer in the Commission on Narcotic Drugs and at meetings of the Heads of National Law Enforcement Agencies (HONLEA). It has also increased fivefold its contribution to the United Nations for the fight against drug abuse.

Luxembourg is aware of the serious problems posed for drug producing and drug processing countries. It welcomes the considerable efforts made by these countries, and here I wish to refer in particular to the courageous action of the Government and the people of Colombia. I welcome also the convening of the Cartagena summit meeting last week. Such meetings are especially welcome, since unilateralism on this subject is doomed to failure. The international community must assist producing and processing countries to escape an economic cycle that has negative social consequences in all countries.

Assistance must, as a priority, go to crop substitution. Through the Twelve of the European Community, Luxembourg has welcomed the action of the Colombian Government and is studying it with a view to identify areas in which bilateral action would be possible. The choice of substitution crops must be made judiciously. It should not eliminate the possibility for producer countries to ensure greater food self-sufficiency. The introduction of new export crops will bear fruit only if we the industrialized countries guarantee their free access to our markets at sufficiently high world prices. For the countries concerned, that is the only way out.

Here I would add that last autumn Luxembourg contributed 5 million Luxembourg francs - that is, more than \$120,000 - to a fund established by the Colombian Government to protect magistrates threatened by terrorism from narco-traffickers.

(Mr. Wohlfart, Luxembourg)

There can be no question of placing the entire burden of the fight against drugs on the producing or processing countries. As a consumer country, Luxembourg has for several years been adopting measures to reduce consumption - which, we must honestly admit, is not declining.

Without relaxing its efforts at enforcement, my Government has intensified action in the area of prevention. Thus each police district has for three years now had an anti-drug expert team competent in making the public - above all, the youth - more aware of the problem through the organization of conferences. In this context I would mention the Luxembourg police union, which has shown a sense of originality by opening an anti-drug disco, which has enjoyed a degree of success among teenagers that went beyond expectations. This innovative approach will continue. And with regard to education, Luxembourg has not simply distributed anti-drug leaflets to teenagers; it has also made these anti-drug texts an integral part of school programmes. Furthermore, the Government has assigned a high-ranking official to ensure co-ordination in all actions and measures taken in the struggle against drugs.

In our view, preventive measures should receive priority, because it has unfortunately become very difficult to bring drug users out of the scourge of this vicious cycle, notwithstanding drug detoxification programmes. As a doctor, I can, in this connection, but confirm the old French proverb: "an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure".

(Mr. Wohlfart, Luxembourg)

International co-operation is especially needed in respect of matters which, by their very nature, can have international aspects - for example, transport, transit, money laundering, and so forth.

In this connection, the Vienna Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances is especially important. My country signed the Convention last year, and intends to ratify it as soon as possible. One of the aspects with which the Vienna Convention deals is the laundering of drug money. Luxembourg occupies a sound financial position and wishes to maintain it. It is therefore committed in particular to implementation of that part of the Convention. In anticipation of ratification of the Convention, my country, on 7 July 1989, adopted one of the most advanced laws in this area. Luxembourg law not only provides punishment for money laundering as such, but also addresses the problem of persons engaged in finance participating in laundering operations, even involuntarily, owing to ignorance of his professional obligations. There could hardly be much legislation on money laundering that goes as far as ours. I add, since some still claim not to know it, that the Government of Luxembourg has never accepted, does not accept, and never will accept, that banking secrecy in Luxembourg could be used as a cover for criminal activity.

In the area of judicial assistance, Luxembourg is one of the most flexible countries, and I can but express satisfaction at the exemplary co-operation that it has always given the main producer and consumer countries in order that traffickers might be deprived of financial means. Very recently, important drug funds were seized in the Grand Duchy. They arrived there after having been laundered elsewhere. As experience has shown, in view of Luxembourg's financial position, and given its legal framework, we are already well placed to fight money laundering. If need be, we shall continue to adjust our legislation to the problem

(Mr. Wohlfart, Luxembourg)

so that drug traffickers may be deprived of any use of our financial market for their operations.

I sincerely hope that this special session will lead to a vigorous and effective global programme of action on which there is consensus. No doubt such a programme will be onerous, but, in truth, there is no alternative. I hope that the programme of action will enable us to renew and strengthen international action against drug trafficking. Luxembourg will endeavour to contribute to its rapid and complete implementation. Because of its global nature, encompassing, as it does, all aspects of the problem, the programme can help to bring hope to all those - and there are many - who are the victims of this scourge.

Mr. SCHLEGEL (German Democratic Republic): One of the major results of the relaxation of international tensions is that the community of States is addressing global issues in a more determined manner, on the basis of the shared responsibility of all the sides involved. The enormous spread of illicit trafficking in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances and associated drug crimes present increasingly difficult problems. This development gives rise to increasing concern, for it jeopardizes the health and lives of millions of people and tends to destroy their social, economic, cultural and political infrastructures. We agree with the Secretary-General of the United Nations that illicit trafficking in narcotic drugs has to be considered one of the seed-beds of new conflicts that pose a threat to peace. It is particularly disquieting that the young generations - the promise of the development and future of peoples - are exposed to the temptations and risks of drug abuse.

Against this background, I wish to express my delegation's hope that at this seventeenth special session of the United Nations General Assembly the international community will make headway in resolving the drug problem.

(Mr. Schlegel, German
Democratic Republic)

For a long time there has been no doubt about the gravity of the problem that is under discussion here, or about its implications - such as criminality, acts of terror, and the spread of AIDS. Consequently, it is all the more imperative that responsible national measures be taken, in close conjunction with international steps. Owing to the interdependence of States, which is becoming increasingly self-evident, the ability, in particular, to shape relations between States in a co-operative and comprehensive manner has assumed a key role. No country will be able to tackle the drug problem on its own. Likewise, the international community cannot dispense with the active participation of any of its members.

In the view of the German Democratic Republic, there are several cornerstones to international co-operation against drug abuse.

First, there must be a comprehensive approach to the problem. In other words, all its aspects - particularly social environment and the interaction of international and national measures - must be taken into account. Secondly, the institutional and legal framework of international co-operation must be utilized fully, and that framework must be reviewed constantly with a view to possible improvements. Thirdly, the United Nations system has a central role to play in co-ordinating international co-operation to combat the drug problem.

Vital importance attaches to the preservation, further elaboration and efficient utilization of the international legal and institutional framework for combating the drug problem. In these efforts, there is an outstanding role for the United Nations to play. This goes for the collection and dissemination of information, for the provision of counselling to Governments, and for the co-ordination of measures concerning education and training and equipment. All

(Mr. Schlegel, German
Democratic Republic)

steps that would tend to make the role of the United Nations more effective deserve our support.

My country advocates universal accession to the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961, as amended by the 1972 Protocol, and to the 1971 Convention on Psychotropic Substances, and it resolutely calls for the speediest possible entry into force of the 1988 United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances. I am pleased to add here that the German Democratic Republic ratified the 1988 Convention on 5 February 1990. The instrument of ratification was deposited with the Secretary-General today. The national legal regulations of my country - notably, the law on narcotic drugs and the penal code, which, largely, meet the requirements of the Convention and have facilitated observance on a provisional basis - will be adjusted completely to the Convention.

In keeping with the foreign-policy principles of my country, its Government declares that the stipulations of the Convention that are aimed at more effective international collaboration will be fully enforced in the conduct of its international co-operative endeavours.

(Mr. Schlegel, German
Democratic Republic)

To discuss the drug problem responsibly requires putting it in the international economic context of overcoming poverty and underdevelopment. Plummeting prices for traditional agricultural commodities, such as sugar, coffee or cotton, have been a root cause for the expanding cultivation of drug crops, particularly in the 1980s. Genuine alternatives to drug production must be sought in order to guard the commercial interests of the producer countries of those farm commodities. Efforts to this end should be part of the programme catalogue to be adopted at this session, as should impulses and guidelines to encourage a broader awareness and to promote education for a drug-free life. The creation of a stable social environment is a decisive criterion for effectively reducing drug demand. This is where full respect for individual human rights comes in. Moreover, we call upon the producers of chemicals and solvents that can be used for illicit drug production to take appropriate precautions that these products cannot reach illegal channels. Increased and more effective customs controls and "controlled deliveries" to be agreed upon by two or more sides constitute major steps to restrict or prevent illicit cross-frontier drug transports.

In addition, the German Democratic Republic deems it imperative to enhance co-operation, both bilateral and regional. We would list under this heading our participation in the sessions of the Heads of European National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies (European HONLEA) as well as our growing bilateral contacts with the United States, the Federal Republic of Germany and other countries.

Experience has shown that co-operation on bilateral, regional and global levels is facilitated if direct links exist between national drug law enforcement agencies to respond quickly to respective incidents. My country is willing to

(Mr. Schlegel, German
Democratic Republic)

establish such contacts with all interested States and subsequently to conclude relevant agreements.

The German Democratic Republic is one of those countries where, so far, there has been no major drug problem and where drug abuse and drug trafficking have been confined to single cases. However, we are being confronted with a changing situation. The opening of the borders - largely welcomed as it was in our country and throughout the world - and the concomitant burgeoning flow of visitors in both directions also involves increasing problems where openness is abused.

One of the risks is that people come up against the drug scene, whether out of curiosity or because drug dealers want to expand their market. As a matter of fact, customs officers of my country registered in recent checks at frontier-crossing points a nearly fivefold increase in illegal drug-possession offences, albeit of small amounts in most of the cases, compared with the situation one year ago.

This situation has prompted us to review our previous drug policies. Competent State organs are intensifying their deliberations on measures to counter the danger of illicit drug traffic. A concept which, in addition to government-administered measures, such as stepped-up and more stringent customs controls, envisages educational efforts on the benefits of living without drugs is being publicly debated and is involving interested citizens' groups and relevant institutions. In this context, the Comprehensive Multidisciplinary Outline (CMO), which was adopted by the 1987 International Conference on Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking in Vienna, proves to be a valuable foundation. Given the nature of drug-related problems, the CMO reflects, in a balanced manner, national and international policies and activities against drugs.

(Mr. Schlegel, German
Democratic Republic)

The German Democratic Republic participated actively in the work of the Vienna Conference and the Commission on Narcotic Drugs and in the elaboration of the 1988 Convention. As I have mentioned, my country devotes great attention to bilateral and regional efforts. And there can be no doubt that the rapid process of change in my country will provide new scope and possibilities for my country to commit itself to international endeavours against the drug evil.

The same holds true for our attitude regarding the United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control (UNFDAC), where we would now like to offer our co-operation. Initial deliberations are focused on the training of experts who are concerned with legal traffic in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances or with measures against cross-frontier drug smuggling. We pledge our contribution, in the framework of our capacities and in co-ordination with other partners, to address global problems, including the drug menace.

The delegation of the German Democratic Republic will take part in the work of the special session building on the ideas I have just outlined. This session should recognize the drug problem as a humanitarian, social, economic and political challenge. It should set the priorities for international co-operation in the years to come, and help strengthen the required international institutional and legal framework. The declaration and the global programme of action must promote concerted, joint and parallel efforts to be taken by the international community.

Mr. SIMONS (Netherlands): The Kingdom of the Netherlands hopes that this special session will lead to concrete proposals for concerted action against drugs. A global plan of action, which is currently being negotiated, appears to my delegation a suitable instrument for such action. With our experience in dealing with matters related to drug trafficking, both in the Netherlands and in the parts

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of the Kingdom situated in the Caribbean, as well as our experience in dealing with questions of demand reduction, we have sought active participation in the elaboration of a global plan of action. Indeed, it is our view that any plan of action should take a broad approach to the matter, stimulate international co-operation and also take into account the social, economic and cultural aspects of the drug problem.

Yesterday the Irish Minister of Justice, Mr. Burke, spoke on behalf of the 12 member States of the European Community, and my delegation, of course, fully subscribes to what he said. In particular we subscribe to the need for international co-operation in the field of combating drug abuse. The Netherlands aims at the early ratification of the 1988 Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances. In the meantime, countries may wish to consider, to the extent possible, provisionally to apply the provisions of the Convention and to start amending their national legislation to bring it in line with that Convention.

(Mr. Simons, Netherlands)

That process is also being considered in the Netherlands, along with the preparation of measures aimed at controlling financial flows in the banking system and seizure of assets related to illegal drug trafficking. Recent developments, especially in Latin America, have once again demonstrated the urgent need for concerted action, in which the United Nations and its drug bodies in Vienna can play an important role. We strongly support the restructuring of and wider co-ordination between the United Nations drug bodies concerned so that the United Nations may be more effective as an international forum for concerted action. Co-ordination should not be limited to the drug bodies, but should also include United Nations specialized agencies.

The aspects of the international fight against drugs are manifold and require the widest possible approach at both the international and regional levels. In that connection we welcome the holding of last week's summit meeting in Colombia. In our view an important outcome of that summit meeting was that demand reduction was recognized as a very important element in the overall battle against drugs. Indeed, demand-reduction programmes are an essential element of any policy to fight drugs, and international co-operation seems appropriate in this field as well. It may be useful to analyse and compare national policies and practices in order to enable Governments to draw lessons and to make comparisons. We think that concerted efforts aimed at demand reduction, which would include realistic approaches to the treatment of drug addicts, should offer a better perspective for improved drug-abuse policies to be pursued at both national and international levels.

In that connection I would like to share some of our experiences in the Netherlands in demand-reduction programmes. Over the past 20 years the Netherlands has developed a drug policy geared to the individual. We have opted for a

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realistic and pragmatic approach to the drug problem. Our primary aim is to protect health and social well-being in general and to reduce the harm and risks associated with drug use. We therefore hold the view that drug abuse is not primarily a problem for police and the courts but, rather, a matter of public health and social well-being. Penal law and its enforcement are essential supporting instruments. Policy objectives, however, may sometimes be conflicting. Governments try to reduce the risks associated with drug abuse by introducing prohibitive penal legislation. At the same time, however, we see drug addicts afflicted by additional physical and social problems that are partly induced by the illegal character of the drug phenomenon. I refer, for instance, to problems of highly priced drugs causing drug-related crimes, of prostitution and social ostracism and of increased risks of infectious diseases like AIDS.

Thus, in the Netherlands we make a distinction between policies aimed at drug users, on the one hand, and, on the other, at drug traffickers. The Netherlands criminal law enables the Administration, through use of so-called prosecutorial discretion, to pursue a pragmatic drug policy towards drug users. If, in the view of the prosecution, criminal proceedings against a drug addict would not solve the problem but aggravate it, the prosecution may decide not to instigate proceedings. In pursuing such a pragmatic policy the risks involved in drug abuse are fully taken into account, but we acknowledge that the cultural and socio-economic circumstances in which drugs are taken, the social background of the users and the reasons they take drugs are at least as important factors as are questions of law enforcement. Those conditions determine the nature and the extent to which drug abuse may, in fact, produce a problem.

We believe that the international community should not pay attention exclusively to substance abuse as such, since drug abuse does not stand alone.

(Mr. Simons, Netherlands)

Poverty, discrimination of ethnic minorities, tension between rich and poor, lack of access to social and health services and poor neighbourhoods are all factors that could lead to substance abuse in our societies. In my country, demand-reduction programmes are therefore being integrated into the social-security system. We believe that if those multisectoral socio-economic aspects are not taken into account, efforts to reduce demand will have little chance of success. They will only deal with the symptoms. Indeed, if there is to be an effective war on drugs, should it not go hand in hand with strong measures to improve the socio-economic perspectives in a country?*

Allow me to mention some results of the drug policies pursued in my country. Our prosecution policy prevents drug users from going underground where we cannot reach them for good treatment. That leads to a deglamourization of drug use. The result is that the vast majority of young people are not interested in drugs. Statistics show that in the age group up to 19 years, 2 per cent used cannabis last month, while less than half a percent of that group used heroin and cocaine in the same period. Crack use is still a rarity in our country.

A second fact is that the state of health of the population of drug users is rather good. It has stabilized and, in some cities, even improved. The number of drug-related deaths is stable at about 60 cases per year.

Thirdly, one of the most striking features of our treatment programmes is the whole different network of services capable of reaching the major part of the addict population. We succeeded by adopting realistic treatment approaches directed at detoxification and at improving addicts' physical and social functioning without requiring immediate abstinence. Our system has no waiting lists. It is easily accessible and free of charge, and it treats addicts

*Mr. Ben Moussa (Morocco), Vice-President, took the Chair.

(Mr. Simons, Netherlands)

respectfully as fellow citizens. We are determined to maintain that treatment approach. Today, approximately 0.1 per cent of the population are drug addicts.

In our drug-abuse policy we incorporate elements that contribute to the prevention of AIDS. The treatment programmes I just mentioned, which enable us to maintain close contact with drug addicts, is an important prerequisite for an effective AIDS-prevention policy. We stress that action to reduce drug abuse should go hand in hand with realistic, appropriate measures in the fight against the global AIDS epidemic. We note with satisfaction that in many countries treatment policies have been adjusted to the twin problems of drug abuse and AIDS.

The Netherlands AIDS-prevention policy aims at changing the habits of addicts in so far as is feasible. The supply and use of sterile syringes and needles in exchange for used ones is one way of dealing with the problem, but it is not a panacea. It must be embedded in a broader treatment programme in which face-to-face counselling to change addicts' behaviour in favour of safer practices plays an essential role.

Syringe programmes do not lead to more drug use or to more injecting but to fewer people sharing syringes, and that is important in the fight against AIDS. The percentage of intravenous drug users among the total group of AIDS patients in our country is relatively low, namely, 7 per cent.

(Mr. Simons, Netherlands)

The problem of drug abuse is with us. It can and should be contained by the adoption of long-term policies, based among other things on reduction of demand. At the same time, we must continue and intensify the struggle against the supply of illicit drugs. Concrete measures to eliminate the transit of drugs through the parts of the Kingdom in the Caribbean have been enacted and are being implemented. I hope and trust that, in spite of the differences of approach between countries, the special session will give fresh impetus to our common fight against drug abuse. I have listened with the greatest attention to the statements made here by many representatives and I am impressed by the formidable problems with which some of their countries are faced. The Kingdom of the Netherlands will do its utmost, together with others, to assist those countries in their efforts to overcome the difficult situation in which they find themselves today.

In this respect, I would draw attention to the fact that we have doubled our unearmarked contribution to the United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control, and that we may in the future consider a further increase, depending on the outcome of the study by a group of experts mandated to advise on the restructuring of the United Nations drug bodies based in Vienna.

In conclusion, I should like to summarize what I said at the beginning of my intervention. It is our sincere hope that the special session will provide an impetus for strengthening international co-operation against drugs, in a broad manner, taking into account not only aspects of law enforcement and other legal measures but also social, economic and cultural aspects related to the drug problem.

Mr. ADJOYI (Togo) (interpretation from French): First, I should like to express to the President of the General Assembly my delegation's satisfaction at seeing him presiding over this special session devoted to the issue of international co-operation against the illicit production, supply, demand,

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trafficking and distribution of drugs and psychotropic substances. Aware as we are of his outstanding qualities and the skill with which he handles the gavel, my delegation is confident that our work will be crowned with positive results. That certainly will be the case, given the professionalism and commitment with which the Preparatory Committee of the special session discharged its mandate. I take this opportunity to hail the personal efforts exerted by the Chairman of the Committee, Mr. Peter Hohenfellner, to make the special session a success, aware that what is at stake is the future of our society, of the human race, threatened with degeneration as a result of the use of drugs.

In fact, it seems to me that this special session is justified by this tragic balance sheet: the consumption of drugs and psychotropic substances has permeated all social strata and is wreaking devastation among, above all, young people - the pillars of our society of tomorrow. Thus, this special session can be seen as a reaction to our concern over the senescence looming over the human race, which, by allowing itself to be undermined by drugs, has failed to shoulder its primary responsibility to protect itself.

We need to have a clear diagnosis of the entire set of problems involving drugs, in its multitude of aspects. We need to get to the deep motives that make some produce and distribute drugs illicitly and others consume them.

In truth, our world, which has essentially become materialistic, is the victim of its own development; it is a world with new values based on a frantic quest for money, for easy-gotten gains, for luxury, with the criminality, disease, disillusionment and despair that this entails.

Partly because of the economic crisis, social problems have multiplied. Thus, for example, the unemployed are now easy prey to drug dealers, as are children whose socialization is no longer undertaken by parents, since for many of them money is the sole moral value. In that context, the magnitude of the problem of

(Mr. Adjayi, Togo)

the illicit production, supply, demand, trafficking and distribution of drugs and psychotropic substances takes on its full meaning and true scope and demands action by the international community.

The problem of drugs and psychotropic substances is extremely complex and multidimensional. The present special session therefore will have to encompass all of its elements, to proffer solutions designed, in particular, to prevent and reduce the demand, to encourage treatment and rehabilitation of victims, to control supply, to eliminate illicit trafficking, to strengthen legal systems, to take measures against the circulation of drug-related money and against the circulation of weapons and explosives and the illegal traffic of aircraft.

In the framework of the prevention and reduction of the illicit demand for drugs and psychotropic substances, control of the illicit traffic, and treatment and rehabilitation, the Declaration of the International Conference on Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking has given us guidelines for our efforts to promote the interregional and international co-operation that is both our duty and our last hope.

In my delegation's opinion, it is clear that drug abuse and the criminality it spawns can be stopped only through preventive efforts based on campaigns of information, education and consciousness-raising concerning the evils of drugs.

The abuses we have noted are linked in particular to a lack of credible information on the immediate and long-term dangers of drug use, of the ever-greater ease with which drugs can be procured, and to an insufficient awareness of the scope of the problem caused by drugs. Hence, priority should be given in the action of States, non-governmental organizations and individuals to highlighting the myths and the true facts concerning drugs and to making it clear that the deliberate use of drugs for non-medical reasons is both dangerous and reprehensible.

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(Mr. Adjoyi, Togo)

In terms of the control of drug supplies, the most appropriate strategy would be to reduce the financial interest in producing such illicit crops.

(Mr. Adjoyi, Togo)

The objective of our actions must be to make the illegal raising of such drug crops as coca leaves or cannabis more fraught with danger, and to prevent drugs and psychotropic substances produced for legal ends to be used for illegal purposes. However, we must be careful not to lose sight of the social, political and economic consequences when we draw up our drug-control programmes based on crop control.

It is indeed clear that it would be a waste of time for us to request that illegal crops be destroyed without offering other, reasonably remunerative, solutions to growers. Income and crop-substitution programmes should therefore, in our view, be a significant alternate solution for those farmers who derive a good proportion of their profits from illegal crops.

Our firm determination to curb drug abuse should above all be reflected in the support that we commit ourselves to provide to drug-control programmes drawn up by the United Nations. In this context, I should like to point out that Togo, which ratified the 1961 and 1971 Conventions on drugs and psychotropic substances, and which signed the 1988 Convention that expands the scope of the two earlier Conventions, is co-operating very closely in the West African subregion with Benin, Ghana and Nigeria in the framework of a quadripartite treaty on mutual assistance to eliminate the illicit drug trafficking in the subregion.

My country, which some traffickers wish to use as a transit country, is sparing no efforts to discourage them through vigilant and effective action on the part of the Togo police. All States must expand their participation in the system of existing treaties - particularly in the most representative of them, which I have just cited: the 1961 Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs and its 1972 Protocol, the 1971 Convention on Psychotropic Substances, and the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances - and promote their rigorous implementation on the national and international levels. The Comprehensive Multidisciplinary Outline of Future Activities in Drug

(Mr. Adjoyi, Togo)

Abuse Control charts the paths to follow in this area. Reflecting its numerous proposals in action appropriate to our local conditions would greatly contribute to the goal we are pursuing.

The activities of drug traffickers make it clear that the illicit trade in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances is a highly complex international operation that not only contravenes national legislation and international conventions but is also accompanied by numerous other types of criminal activity, including collusion among gangsters, violation of banking regulations, assassinations, acts of terrorism and so on. Often forced into an unequal struggle against extremely powerful drug traffickers, some of our States see their stability jeopardized as a result.

In order to reduce supply, discourage attendant crime and prevent drug abuse by establishing an environment favourable to reduced demand, the only effective weapon remains the rigorous application of narcotics legislation. In this respect, our attention should be focused primarily on the 1988 United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances. Since its major asset is that it has improved and strengthened international co-operation and co-ordination among customs and police services and legal bodies and defined the legal principles on which they must be based if they are effectively to eradicate all the various stages of illegal drug trafficking, its entry into force would doubtless provide that invaluable weapon we so badly need if we are to cleanse our society of addicts, who are victims of drug dealers but also responsible for the perpetration of crimes in our societies.

My delegation believes, as do many others, that to ensure that addicts can again lead a drug-free life, treatment and rehabilitation must be adapted to each specific case and employ all means of treatment that have proved useful. Support machinery must also be set up for individuals and families to prevent relapses.

(Mr. Adjoyi, Togo)

As we meet, the drug cartels formed by producers, traffickers and consumers are on their guard, wondering from which direction the blow will be struck.

Like the American, Bolivian, Colombian and Peruvian Heads of State, who on 15 February 1990 signed the Cartagena Declaration laying down the bases for co-operation among the producer and consumer countries to curb cocaine trafficking, our special session must also adopt by consensus specific measures to strengthen international co-operation in the fight against the scourge of our times, drug abuse.

It is important that those measures be adopted by consensus. In this regard, my delegation hopes that the two documents now being drafted - the political declaration and the global programme of action - will be considered with all due care by the various delegations, aware of their responsibility to fight against drug abuse and the illicit trafficking in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances, and to contribute to the establishment of a sound international society effectively able to provide that real happiness to which humanity aspires and in which the lofty, fundamental values will be respected.

Mr. VALLEJO (Ecuador) (interpretation from Spanish): I should like to join my voice to the chorus that has congratulated Mr. Garba on his election to preside over the Assembly at this special session, which will no doubt contribute to the success of our deliberations. I also wish to congratulate the Chairman of the Preparatory Committee.

I speak here on behalf of Ecuador, a country characterized by a climate of peace and respect. Despite the problems and frustrations inherent in a situation of crisis prevailing in the world, this small Andean nation has been able to maintain a climate of peace and respect, and of optimism and hope. It is a country that has not only great potential for development based on its extraordinary wealth

(Mr. Vallejo, Ecuador)

of natural resources, but also a varied, friendly and hard-working population whose main economic resource, as President of the Republic Rodrigo Borja has said, is peace.

(Mr. Vallejo, Ecuador)

In that island of peace, a region that is defending itself against violence and crisis, there are no coca plantations, and cocaine is not refined. According to international statistics, during the 1980s Ecuador never produced more than 1 per cent of the total coca production of the Andean region. Its people have never acquired the habit of coca consumption, and its economy does not depend on coca growing. The influence of drug money on the national economy is negligible. We have little or no judicial or administrative corruption. There is no major narcotics mafia, nor does the country have violence, the brutal consequence of such elements. As a result, observers from all nations speak of Ecuador as an island of peace.

For those reasons Ecuador did not attend the recent Cartagena summit meeting, which brought together the presidents of the four countries most affected by narcotics production, traffic and consumption in circumstances that are radically different from those of Ecuador. Of course, my country is acutely aware of the gravity of the problem and of its multilateral character, which calls for co-ordinated efforts and the organization of legal machinery, informational exchange and effective control of financial assets to identify, freeze, confiscate and implement additional procedures to end the laundering of drug profits. There is still time to accomplish this. Soon, it will be too late.

Ecuador is firmly resolved to co-operate in the war on drugs. It is in our own interest to do so, for it is the only way to ensure a future of continued social peace for our children.

We believe that at the international level a major advance has been made with the express recognition by the developed countries of the need for action with regard to drug production and processing. In other words, drug supply cannot be divorced from the urgent need to reduce drug demand and consumption.

(Mr. Vallejo, Ecuador)

Virgilio Barco, the President of Colombia, said that the only law respected by drug traffickers is the law of supply and demand. That is true. We hope that the Cartagena summit meeting represents a new stage of co-responsibility in which the countries that produce and those that consume drugs will come together in a spirit of firm and decisive action, leaving behind the era of mutual accusations when they were prevented from taking an overall approach to the problem and fighting it in all its aspects.

The Government of Ecuador has declared an all-out war against drug trafficking and has sent its National Chamber of Representatives an important package of legal reforms for effective action in the fields of prevention and education. Convinced of the need to work in that area, in the early months of its Administration the Government of President Rodrigo Borja put forward a national plan for the comprehensive prevention of drug production, trafficking and consumption. The Government of Ecuador views the phenomenon of drug trafficking as a complex one, with harmful effects on many fronts and with devastating effects at the economic, social, military, educational, health and legal levels. Thus, it promotes a comprehensive strategy that includes short-term, medium-term and long-term goals, international participation and global attention to the structural roots of the phenomenon.

In view of that, it has asked the National Chamber to enact constitutional reforms that will require the exercise of habeas corpus for those persons charged with drug offences. That will permit the eventual extradition of Ecuadorian citizens charged with drug-related crimes in other countries and who cannot therefore be tried in Ecuadorian courts, thus giving them legal impunity. It has also submitted to the legislature a complete body of laws to modernize the Ecuadorian legal system, taking into account the latest advances in jurisprudence on the national and international levels with regard to the dynamic and

(Mr. Vallejo, Ecuador)

multirooted phenomenon of drug trafficking. The legal reforms now under discussion in the National Chamber include increased powers for governmental financial authorities to detect and impede the laundering of illegal drug moneys. That bill also provides for the punishment of the ever-changing and new forms of crime that evolve out of such activities.

Let us be clear. We will win this war only through determined international co-operation and shared responsibility. Ecuador is willing to take the necessary difficult steps. But the effort we make as one individual nation cannot have the same effect if legal reforms introduced in one country are not reciprocated in others.

Let us take joint actions to ensure that no person is safe in any country if charged with drug offenses in another nation.

The efforts taken in this connection by the Andean Parliament are reasonable ones. It has set up a permanent commission of jurists to study the legislation of the five Andean nations and is attempting to codify it.

It is also my pleasure to announce here that our National Chamber has ratified our participation in the Vienna Convention.

Assistance to strengthen police capabilities is important. More crucial still are measures to make our economies more dynamic and flexible, to create incentives for alternative and profitable crop cultivations, to allow our products better and increased access to markets in the developed world under fair terms of trade and to help provide a visionary solution to the debt problem. After all, those too are essential weapons in the war on drugs and cannot be separated from other steps in the fields of drug education, prevention and enforcement.

As members of the Andean region and as first-hand observers we know that because of the economies in that area the problem of drug trafficking cannot be

(Mr. Vallejo, Ecuador)

solved unless we first alleviate the financial crisis and support reasonable development plans.

Given its transport, export and money-laundering aspects, drug trafficking transcends national boundaries. The problem has been internationalized, and the solutions must therefore also be international. Ecuador proposes that we cross national frontiers together and together defend our citizens. Let us cross the frontier of unilateral action, unrelated legislation, lack of financing and economic underdevelopment. Let us stop the drug traffickers from crossing our borders with impunity. Without losing sight of the multinational nature of the problem, which goes beyond the capacity of a single nation to fight it, we must not at the same time undermine the national sovereignty of individual countries. At the same time, too, we must also recognize that drug trafficking is itself an assault on national sovereignty, since it is a crime that often lies outside the control of individual States.

The Government of Ecuador has proposed to its National Chamber transcendental legal reforms to combat drug trafficking. It now proposes to this congress of all the world's nations that we all agree to walk the same path together and seek to harmonize our laws with one another in consonance with existing international laws and treaties. To fail to do this will diminish the effectiveness of the monumental struggle we all face. A recommendation that all Members of this body act accordingly should be the key outcome of the General Assembly's special session.

Mr. SRITHIRATH (Lao People's Democratic Republic) (interpretation from French): The delegation of the Lao People's Democratic Republic is pleased that Ambassador Garba is presiding over the Assembly, and we wish him every success in carrying out his difficult and complex tasks. We are aware of his qualities as an experienced diplomat and hope that this special session on the drug problem will achieve satisfactory results.

The convening of this special session on the question of international co-operation against illicit production, supply, demand, trafficking and distribution of narcotic drugs is a reflection of the international community's great interest in that problem. In resolution 39/142, the General Assembly defined the trade in drugs as a crime against humanity; recently the drug problem has taken on a new and alarming international dimension and thus constitutes a serious threat to international peace and security. In the struggle against drugs we must stress the joint responsibility of consumer and producer countries. They are fighting on the same front, and are in the same boat; together they can promote and undertake promising international action to win victory over the drug traffickers. The squabble between consumer and producer countries makes no contribution to achieving the noble objectives we are all pursuing; quite the contrary, it can only be in the evil interests of the drug barons.

The illegal trade in narcotics is a transnational enterprise that respects neither the boundaries nor the laws of sovereign States. Every country - consumer, producer or transit - must play its role in the international community's battle against the drug cartels. While no one disputes the fact that coca and opium poppy grow in developing countries, the world is very well aware that the chemicals necessary to manufacture cocaine and heroin are provided by firms in developed

(Mr. Srithirath, Lao People's
Democratic Republic)

countries that are consumer countries. The point is not to blame any single category of country; with a view to effectiveness, each country should play the role it can best play.

Drug abuse is a complex problem with deeply rooted social causes. Unfortunately, many countries have fallen victim to it and are now waging a dogged struggle to free themselves. On the basis of international legal instruments - the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961 and its 1972 Protocol, the Convention on Psychotropic Substances of 1971 and, most recent, the United Nations Convention against Illicit Trafficking in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988 - each country is devising its own anti-drug strategy and is thus participating in international action to eradicate this scourge. Among the main themes given pride of place in national strategies are crop-substitution, public information campaigns, enforcement of laws and regulations, preventive education, treatment and rehabilitation of addicts, and international co-operation. The fact is that a suitable legal framework exists and anti-drug action has been launched and should, we think, be given a new and greater impetus at this session. The drug cartels are watching this important session, and will surrender if we are truly united and determined to reflect our shared will in concrete action.

My country, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, fully shares the world's grave concern about the drug problem. To make its modest contribution to international action, the Lao Government, taking into account the economic and social realities of our country, has taken numerous important steps to fight against drugs. There are two aspects to our action.

The first, to which the Government attaches special importance, is to persuade those who continue traditionally to grow poppies to abandon that crop and replace it with other equally profitable substitute crops. In this connection, in

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February 1989 we signed an assistance agreement with the United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control relating to an integrated rural development project in the mountainous regions of Vientiane province. In September 1989 and in January 1990 we also signed an agreement with the United States on an integrated rural development project in Houaphanh province and a Memorandum of Understanding on co-operation in the field of narcotics.

Moreover, the Lao Government has sent participants to a seminar on crop-substitution organized by the United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control in Pakistan last November, and to a seminar for customs agents now under way in Singapore. It has acted as host to several foreign delegations in recent months, including delegations from the United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control, Sweden, the Japanese Foreign Ministry, and the Drug Enforcement Agency and the Congressional Select Committee on Narcotics Abuse and Control of the United States, to discuss the drug problem.

The second aspect relates to repressive action, which for the present applies only to traffickers. Article 135 of our new penal code, adopted in December 1989, punishes illicit trafficking in narcotics with a prison sentence of up to 10 years.

(Mr. Srithirath, Lao People's
Democratic Republic)

In this area, in 1988, our law enforcement agents dismantled two heroin-producing laboratories in the north of the country and arrested and indicted 50 persons involved in the matter.

Since this is a long-term task, in the years to come we shall certainly pursue and expand our co-operation with the United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control and other international organizations, as well as with countries concerned with the drug problem. In implementation of our policy in this area, we envisage acceding in the near future to the 1988 United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances.

In the struggle against drug abuse constructive, effective and sincere international co-operation is necessary. In the context of such co-operation, each country has the sovereign right to determine and take such measures as it may deem appropriate, and any form of foreign interference must be firmly rejected. Moreover, as the Heads of State or Government of non-aligned countries declared at their ninth Conference, held last year in Belgrade, in no circumstances can the anti-drug crusade be used for political ends.

Drug abuse has now become an extremely serious problem. Energetic national and international efforts must be made at all levels to eradicate this scourge on the face of our planet. First, it must be recognized that the fight against drugs depends on reduction of demand and that it is therefore necessary to adopt effective measures to eliminate illicit drug use, for so long as demand exists the problem will persist. In the context of these ideas, we welcome the convening in London in April 1990 of an international conference on reduction of demand. That conference will give States the opportunity to reassert their political will and to proceed to exchanges of data on experience in the treatment and prevention of drug addiction.

(Mr. Srithirath, Lao People's
Democratic Republic)

In conclusion, the delegation of the Lao People's Democratic Republic would like to assure the Assembly of its readiness to co-operate and do all in its power to contribute to the successful outcome of the work of this important special session.

Mr. MALMIERCA PEOLI (Cuba) (interpretation from Spanish): It is a pleasure for my delegation to congratulate Mr. Garba once again, this time on his election to the presidency of this important special session of the General Assembly to consider the question of international co-operation against illicit production, supply, demand, trafficking and distribution of narcotic drugs, a subject of singular importance for mankind today.

Events in the recent past in several countries, with a dramatic toll of innocent victims of the violence generated by drug lords, constitute an urgent warning on the need to take concerted action to put an end to this scourge of mankind.

The fact that some of the countries most directly involved in and affected by that phenomenon have recognized and admitted that drug consumption constitutes an undeniable element in the search for a comprehensive solution to the problem has facilitated our gathering here today to consider every aspect of this matter, as indicated in the title of the item under consideration.

It would be neither just nor reasonable to approach the production aspect on the basis of the simplistic so-called solution of attacking and eradicating the crops. The real and lasting solution must include the adoption of concrete measures for the promotion of specific programmes of comprehensive rural development that will facilitate crop substitution and guarantee remunerative prices for the new crop in international markets, as well as the transfer to other productive activities of the growers of plants used in drug production.

(Mr. Malmierca Peoli, Cuba)

These programmes require the large resources that developing countries, which are enduring terrible conditions of economic crisis, have so far not been able to obtain. Thus, the developed countries and the donor community in general should show a clear and resolute will to co-operate in providing possibilities for the solution of the problems that prevent development. These problems include the insupportable and unpayable external debt, the protectionist barriers, the unequal terms of trade and restricted access to international markets for their basic commodities. In general, an increased flow of financial resources to those countries is necessary.

International co-operation for development, particularly in the form of the solution of the problem of the external debt of developing countries and the establishment of a new and more just international economic order, is the most realistic way of addressing this aspect of the fight against narcotic drugs.

At a time when the international community cherishes the hope of new agreements in the field of disarmament and the dismantling of strategic weapons, the developing countries are again expressing their desire that the resources released by disarmament be transformed into resources for their development, resources for international co-operation in the development of the third world, which would ensure the greater viability of the common action in the struggle against abuse of and illicit traffic in narcotic drugs.

On the other hand, it is now generally accepted that the continued increase in consumption determines the production of narcotic drugs. Thus, the countries with high consumption levels, above all the United States, the largest consumer, have a particular responsibility in the fight against drugs. If such countries are able and determined to adopt the necessary preventive, rehabilitative and punitive measures to try to eradicate consumption, supply and production will obviously collapse proportionately. Consumption determines production, not vice versa;

(Mr. Malmierca Peoli, Cuba)

demand generates supply. Everyone knows that the profits derived from the drug market in the United States amount to billions of dollars every year.

The main profits stem from the production and sale of cocaine. However, it is appropriate to recall that the cultivation of marijuana in the United States competes in importance with the cultivation of wheat and corn and that profits from marijuana are estimated at \$16 billion a year. The Government of the United States does not need to deploy aircraft carriers or paratroopers in other countries in order to combat the cultivation of that drug and its transport to consumer centres.

The huge amounts flowing from the economies of the highly industrialized societies of the consumer countries to the production and trafficking structures, which, added to the tragedy of underdevelopment and poverty, have made the drug crop the most lucrative, if not the only crop, within the reach of hundreds of thousands of peasants in Latin America, generate profits that exceed those derived from the arms trade. Thus, drug trafficking creates a broad network of corruption that often involves key elements in the institutions that are supposed to combat it. It is of course the metastasis of a disease that is rooted in the huge capital surplus derived from neo-colonial inequality and exploitation, a capital surplus that is reproducing itself in the drug market in an unprecedented manner.

This does not relieve Governments of their responsibility and only by strong and consistent action can we deal with the situation.

(Mr. Malmierca Peoli, Cuba)

In another context - and, owing to the vast difference in dimension, without wanting to compare the two - Cuba has succeeded in the total elimination of a small corrupt growth on the sound body of its own society, in which there are no socio-economic or moral bases for drug trafficking.

A further essential aspect that has been emphasized throughout this negotiating process pertains to the observance of the principles enshrined in the United Nations Charter. None of the actions that may be contemplated in either the political declaration or programme of action that will result from the special session should conceal an intent to violate or be used as a pretext for violating the national sovereignty or territorial integrity of any Member State, nor for interfering in its internal affairs. It is a blatant mockery that in the guise of a pretentious anti-drug crusade, a military super-Power like the United States should grossly trample on the dignity and honour of the Panamanian people through a military intervention that is still going on and that has violently removed that country from the community of independent States. We wish to reiterate that in Panama the United States has pursued and continues to pursue other spurious aims, namely, the installation of a docile government that will allow it to fulfil its designs, blatantly flouting and ignoring the Torrijos-Carter Canal Treaties and perpetuating its military presence in Panama beyond 1 January 2000. From this rostrum we warn that such impudent acts could well be repeated on a similar pretext. We therefore resolutely support international co-operation to combat drug trafficking and related activities, but at the same time we shall remain vigilant and oppose any action or mechanism that could be used to violate the borders of our countries, our sovereignty or our territorial integrity.

Recently Colombia, with the support of Latin American solidarity, had to reject another United States attempt to send units of its Navy into Colombian

(Mr. Malmierca Peoli, Cuba)

territorial waters, again on the pretext of combatting drug trafficking. We have consistently stated, and we repeat again here, that we totally reject any action designed to establish a supranational body or mechanism that might endanger the observance of those principles. We have been candid and open with those who, in good faith, have proposed the establishment of international forces to combat drug trafficking or the creation of an international court to try such crimes, and we have warned them of the dangers and the uncontrollable consequences that may arise out of such initiatives.

The draft declaration and plan of action that are now being negotiated contain valuable initiatives and ideas that we fully support. We have actively participated in a constructive spirit in the deliberations, and we will continue to encourage and support such elements as crop substitution and assistance to producing countries to prevent and eradicate the illicit traffic in narcotic drugs and money laundering and to eliminate consumption. We especially welcome the inclusion of safeguards to guarantee national sovereignty. We emphasize those aspects because they are of crucial importance to our developing countries at a time when gunboat policies are again coming into vogue.

As delegations are aware, a United States warship recently attempted to board an unarmed vessel in Cuban hire and flying the Panamanian flag, the "Hermann," on the pretext of conducting a search on suspicion that the ship may have been transporting drugs. We do not intend to discuss here the provocative intentions behind such Yankee vandalism, since the matter was publicly explained by the President of the Council of State and Council of Ministers of Cuba, Commander-in-Chief Fidel Castro, and subsequently reported on in detail to the Security Council. We cannot, however, fail to mention such a repugnant act of aggression because it is one in a series of aggressive acts the United States has

(Mr. Malmierca Peoli, Cuba)

taken against Cuba and other developing countries and because in less than two months the United States has committed two criminal acts on the same pretext: the so-called combat against drug trafficking. Has the United States settled on that pretext to support its inadmissible hegemonic policy of acting as a universal gendarme? What State can feel safe within its borders when it knows that a super-Power has assumed for itself the right to intervene anywhere in the world on the pretext of combatting drugs?

We are also prepared to co-operate at the bilateral level with all States that are honestly willing to participate in anti-drug programmes - and, indeed, we are in the process of negotiating a bilateral agreement with a country in our own region, which proves our true determination to combat the scourge of drugs at the national and bilateral levels and to co-operate with regional and international efforts in the struggle against one of the principal scourges of our present-day world, the illicit use of drugs.

That readiness and will to co-operate on the part of the Cuban Government has no exceptions, nor is it conditioned by political differences, whatever they may be. But no one can set up unilateral rules, nor can anyone attempt to force us to co-operate on terms convenient to them when, according to their laws, we are not qualified to take steps to normalize such co-operation - and the more so - as is the case with the United States - when it is itself vitally interested. If we agree that the drug-trafficking phenomenon takes precedence over any belligerency between States or Governments, the concertation of bilateral or multilateral efforts with regard to that phenomenon should be conceived and implemented irrespective of such conflicts. At the same time the complexity and magnitude of anti-drug-trafficking operations require co-operation at the operational level, which can only be effective on the basis of common agreement.

(Mr. Malmierca Peoli, Cuba)

Last week the Presidents of Bolivia, Colombia, Peru and the United States met in Colombia to deal with questions related to the anti-drug struggle. The Latin American Presidents emphasized the economic and social aspects of the problem, which is summarized in the Bolivian thesis of "coca for development." It is clear that theses concerning integrity, shared responsibility, a lasting solution through economic development and preservation of the principle of national sovereignty were the focus of the positions of the participating Latin American Presidents. While welcoming the fact that the meeting recognized the integral nature of the problem - production, trafficking and consumption - and that the curtailing of supply must go hand in hand with the curtailing of demand in the consuming countries, we would draw attention to the fact that the potential participation of United States troops in repressive activities was not incorporated as part of the collective agreement and that that was left to the bilateral discretion of the countries concerned.

This special session will be followed by other important events, among them the ministerial meeting on the reduction of drug demand and combating the threat of cocaine to be held at London in April. In that context, we attach a special importance to the proposal to declare a United Nations decade against drug abuse for the period 1991 to 2000, which should serve as an ideal framework for the implementation of the decisions derived from this special session. We hope that the special session will be a source of encouragement and inspiration for future actions.

Mr. CHINKULI (Zambia): On behalf of the people and the Government of the Republic of Zambia, and on my own behalf, I wish to extend congratulations and good wishes to Ambassador Garba on his unanimous election to the presidency of the General Assembly at this special session. I am confident that he will carry out the tasks of President with distinction. His well-known diplomatic skills, which have been amply demonstrated in his efficient stewardship of the forty-fourth regular session of the General Assembly and the sixteenth special session, on apartheid, justify our confidence.

Let me join all those who have already noted the constructive role being played by the Secretary-General, His Excellency Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, in the resolution of complex problems besetting the world community. In particular, my delegation wishes to pay a tribute to his tireless efforts in promoting peace in various corners of the world.

The successful implementation of Security Council resolution 435 (1978) on Namibia is due in no small measure to his commitment and positive contribution. We now await with eagerness the independence of Namibia on 21 March this year under a democratically elected Government led by the South West Africa People's Organization and to Namibia's subsequent entry into this family of nations.

The role of the United Nations in world affairs continues to expand. That is as it should be. This Organization is the most effective means of promoting the diverse interests of mankind in all areas of human endeavour. It is therefore fitting that the world community has decided to come together through the United Nations to fight the war against the illicit production, supply, demand, trafficking and distribution of narcotic drugs. The human race is threatened by the insidious scourge of narcotics, which is undermining the values of civilized society and the integrity and indeed the sovereignty of States.

(Mr. Chinkuli, Zambia)

The problem we are considering at this special session pervades and magnifies all other problems. There are many actors in this illicit commerce, drawn to it by numerous factors. Poverty plays its part. So does greed, greed in its most excessive and disgusting manifestation. That greed has perverted the glorious ingenuity of mankind. Some of the best brains mankind can boast are devoted to the production of chemicals to refine illicit drugs or produce new synthetic "wonders" affordable even by the poorest of society. The most prestigious banks are being enticed to launder drug money. Whole mercenary armies are being raised to defend this industry of misery.

The nervous stress brought about in life by rapid change in developed and developing countries also fuels the drug problem.

Given the multifaceted character of the drug problem, one cannot entertain the idea of apportioning blame. No segment of society is safe. No country is neutral ground for the narcotics industry. All of us have to play our respective roles in this fight.

We need an adequately balanced focus on the various illicit drugs confronting mankind today. No single drug should be given prominence over others in our collective efforts at eradication. Thus, cocaine and its derivatives such as crack and ice should receive the same attention as other illicit drugs such as opium, heroin, mandrax and marijuana or cannabis. Otherwise the drug kingpins will always have the opportunity to diversity their illicit trade into drugs whose interdiction is not tight.

Let me welcome the results of the regional drug summit recently held in Colombia by the Presidents of Bolivia, Colombia, Peru and the United States of America. That summit, like this special session, has made incontestable the idea

(Mr. Chinkuli, Zambia)

of collective responsibility in the fight against illicit drugs without resorting to the untenable extreme of any one country or group of countries sacrificing national sovereignty.

The agreed position of the regional summit is commendable. It highlighted the fact that if nations adopt comprehensive and constructive principles of working together it will be possible to narrow and finally eliminate the operational base of the narcotics industry. My delegation welcomes the regional anti-drug strategy adopted at the summit. It has significance for other regions, including our own.

Let me now turn to Zambia's efforts in combating the drug problem. Zambia was the fiftieth State to sign the 1988 United Nations Convention, last February in Vienna. Our Government is soon to ratify the 1971 and 1988 Conventions and the 1972 Protocol.

Zambia is also among the very few countries in Africa with a specialized narcotics enforcement agency. Our agency is in its infancy, having become legally operational on 1 January this year. Our Drug Enforcement Commission is backed by an act of Parliament providing for penalties in relation to property connected with dangerous drugs and for the seizure and forfeiture of property connected with activities related to offences under the act, the Dangerous Drugs Act, or any foreign law corresponding to that act. The act also provides for assistance to foreign countries in matters relating to or connected with dangerous drugs and in matters connected with or incidental to the foregoing.

The establishment of a specialized institution for drug enforcement has its background in unprecedented seizures of mandrax tablets destined for South Africa. It marked the culmination of the grave concern expressed by our President, His Excellency Mr. Kenneth David Kaunda, and the Government over the grave dangers posed by the effects of largely illicit drug trafficking, and to some extent by

(Mr. Chinkuli, Zambia)

potential drug abuse and the resultant negative effects of financial and currency destabilization through money laundering and black market dealings in currency.

The drug phenomenon in Zambia and the southern African region in general is relatively new, and it represents a new claim on our scarce resources.

Consequently, it is inescapable that substantial technical assistance should be required to supplement our resources to fight the traffickers, whose limitless access to money and its corrupting influence makes the struggle all the harder.

(Mr. Chinkuli, Zambia)

We in Zambia view it of paramount importance to consider that law enforcement can achieve the desired results only if it goes hand in hand with other measures like drug education, treatment, rehabilitation and crop substitution within the context of integrated rural development programmes. That is in line with the Comprehensive Multidisciplinary Outline of 1987.

Zambia is cognizant of the need for regional co-operation in the fight against drugs. To this end, efforts are underway in our region to secure consensus on the holding of consultations and evolving a regional strategy to fight drugs.

Zambia is convinced that measures to combat drugs, particularly in the developing countries where most production and supply lines originate, cannot be taken without due regard to the prevailing conditions of poverty brought about by the adverse international economic climate. Such conditions of poverty and deprivation compel some segments of the population of those countries to engage in the production of illicit drugs.

In some countries, poverty has been made worse by unsustainable levels of external debt and debt service, which have engendered adjustment programmes placing many populations on the margin of existence. Hence the problem of external debt and debt service cannot be overlooked in countries that have to fight a drug problem at the production and transit levels.

The role of the United Nations in the war against drugs has been widely noted. It is the hope of my delegation that the special session will agree on concrete measures to enhance the activities of the United Nations organs involved in drug control. That may necessitate increased funding and to some extent restructuring of their operational activities. My delegation looks forward to participating in the forthcoming drug-demand reduction conference to be convened in London this spring. My delegation attaches great importance to the reduction of

(Mr. Chinkuli, Zambia)

demand in the war against drugs. As a basic principle, no supply is possible in conditions where demand is non-existent.

The will of my Government to join hands with the international community to fight all aspects of the drug problem is steadfast. We see this as a war we are duty-bound to fight. The special session has mobilized international opinion against narcotics, and the international community will be able to take stock of the many and new features of the global problem of drugs. My delegation hopes that at the special session the international community will agree on a global strategy that should guide international co-operation against drugs - and the shadow economy propelling them - for many years to come. Illicit drugs bring wealth to so few and degradation to so many. Illicit drugs must be eradicated from our midst. For that to be done, we all must stand and work together as members of the international community and put up a comprehensive fight. We are destined to win; I have no doubt about that.

Mr. ADOUKI (Congo) (interpretation from French): On behalf of my delegation, I should like to make some brief comments on the phenomenon of drugs, for the holding of the seventeenth special session of the General Assembly and the most impressive list of outstanding speakers attests to the extent of the dimensions and above all to the real changes in the scope of the phenomenon. In fact, the debate deals with international co-operation against the illicit production, supply, demand, traffic and distribution of drugs.

We all stand in solidarity within this singularly wide perspective of the problem, for we are all potentially or in fact producer, transit or consumer countries. Some of our countries, the producers of psychotropic pharmaceutical products that are distributed without sufficiently strict control, are today confronted by heroin use among young people and the most disadvantaged social groups. Did this shock wave originate within the immense confines of Asia?

(Mr. Adouki, Congo)

Is it from the empire of the Medellin cartel, the symbol of Colombian drugs, that it is relentlessly transmitted through homoeopathic doses to the entire human race?

The glare of day-to-day reality reveals countless acts of cruelty, robbery and attacks that can be traced to drug traffickers and their money. Thus, through such acts of violence and the accumulation of huge fortunes, the drug trade would shackle all nations of the modern world, their economic and social fabric and, indeed, the noble and political framework of States of the North and the South.*

Owing to the natural course of events, the genuine panic experienced by families has not, it is true, made itself felt in political helplessness. In this spirit, we hail the courage and determination of the Colombian authorities, and the Head of State Mr. Virgilio Barco was warmly greeted by the forty-fourth session of the General Assembly. One cannot imagine that protection should be requested elsewhere than from the State or the international community, given the threat of cataclysm?

Thus, the delegation of Congo shares the idea put forward by the delegation of the United States that no country, no matter how large it may be, can alone rid itself of the scourge of drugs without the assistance of other countries. Similarly, no country, no matter how small, can fail to contribute in some way to the joint campaign waged by the international community.

It is true that with the fortunate appearance of the economic dimension of the struggle against drugs, the States of Africa that are among the most disadvantaged of the planet and that must meet many of the modern era's other challenges - the debt burden, the struggle against AIDS - are seeing increasing demands made of them in their efforts of international solidarity. Faced with this agonizing problem, the regional solution, symbolized by the recent summit meeting held in

* Mr. Hurst (Antigua and Barbuda), Vice-President, took the Chair.

(Mr. Adouki, Congo)

Cartagena between the Presidents of Peru, Bolivia, Colombia and the United States, is a significant step and lends encouragement for the peoples of the subregion.

(Mr. Adouki, Congo)

In addition, at the international level the United Nations has instruments available to it to fight against drugs. Over the past 40 years it has established various conventions, in particular the 1988 Convention against Illicit Traffic in Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, whose substantive provisions are indeed a formidable weapon. My delegation is grateful to Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, the United Nations Secretary-General, for the urgent appeal he made yesterday to Member States to strengthen the arsenal of measures available to the international community in its struggle against drugs and for urging States Members that had not yet done so to ratify the 1988 Convention immediately in order to thwart the expansion of the trade in illicit drugs.

In acceding to this global strategy in the struggle against drugs the Congo believes that particular attention should be given to prevention among the most vulnerable groups, the young and the socially disadvantaged, in the form of educational and information programmes. In order to do that we must mobilize our national educational and information machinery and take effective and diversified action to supplement the intensive efforts of the police and customs officials.

Obviously, above and beyond its own efforts my country puts great hope in the strengthening of the United Nations anti-drug organs and in the future increase of in the financial means available.

Mr. RAMADHANI (United Republic of Tanzania): On behalf of the Government and people of the United Republic of Tanzania, I wish to extend to the President our congratulations on his unanimous election to steer the work of the seventeenth special session of the General Assembly.

Nations have joined together as never before in a global commitment to eliminate the problem of drug abuse and illicit trafficking. We have all been witness, particularly in the past few years, to the devastating effects the

(Mr. Ramadhani, United
Republic of Tanzania)

international illicit traffic in narcotic drugs has had on the social, economic and political well-being of States, producing and consuming States alike.

The special session comes at a critical juncture in our drug-control efforts. This is so because the problem of drug abuse and illicit trafficking transcends all differences. It is not a problem of race or of colour, of frontiers or nations, of ideology or religion. Neither does it follow the level of economic development. It is, therefore, a problem which is of great concern to mankind.

Fortunately, the international community has not simply shrugged its shoulders in the face of those threats, but has responded to them with the development of legal mechanisms aimed at containing them. Nevertheless, we must not be complacent with what we have achieved, but, rather, we must ceaselessly work to develop new ways to improve and supplement those mechanisms we have already put into place.

No one is unaware of the social consequences of drug abuse and illicit trafficking. That problem, which above all attacks mainly the foundation of society, namely, its youth, is viewed as a very serious problem by my Government. For this reason we support and implement the 1961 Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs and the 1972 Protocol amending it, as well as the 1971 Convention on Psychotropic Substances. We need to use those instruments even more effectively in the years ahead to control worldwide drug production.

Illicit traffic in narcotic drugs is no longer confined to remote airstrips and dark street corners. It has acquired a scope and a muscle against which none are secure. The law is under siege, Government is in many places intimidated and social norms are contemptuously violated. We live in a time of universal emergency. We can only be rescued by an effort that is universal in scope.

The inducements gained from this are known to all of us, but certain complexities exist. While it is true that sordid fortunes are being made, we

(Mr. Ramadhani, United
Republic of Tanzania)

should be reminded that the cultivation of narcotic substances is not in every case a reflection of moral callousness and decay, but, rather, the result of dire economic necessity, a necessity that can mean the difference between a family's starvation and its survival. While we are not here to condone such a situation, we wish to suggest that measures intended to terminate narco-commerce be designed so as to address its subtle anomalies and complexities. In our opinion the drug traffickers convey a fundamental fact: the menace of drugs is bound up with demand, and the industry sustained, not by poverty-bound producer communities, but by indulgent communities wrestling with problems, countries in which its patrons are assembled and where its brokers and protectors maintain their bases.

We do face a common menace that threatens the stability of both developed and developing societies. It is a menace capable of seducing people everywhere, across the borders of all cultures.

It is the hope of my delegation that the special session will adopt a global programme of action that will be action oriented, containing concrete, comprehensive short- and long-term objectives. It should be based on a sound strategy that simultaneously addresses all aspects of the problem, namely, reducing demand, controlling supply, halting illicit traffic and rehabilitating those addicted to drugs. In that connection my delegation would also like to emphasize the need for the drug-consuming countries to step up measures to reduce local demand for drugs, because without a market, no business can exist.

Speaking from Tanzania's experience, the problem of drug abuse and illicit trafficking in drugs and psychotropic substances is almost a new phenomenon in the crime records of our country. With the exception of marijuana or bhang smoking, the abuse of other types of illicit drugs has been unknown. Now, however, drug-related problems have been surfacing in the country. Because of its

(Mr. Ramadhani, United
Republic of Tanzania)

geographical situation, Tanzania is primarily used as a transit territory by the drug traffickers.

An analysis should be undertaken of the methods and routes used for illicit transit traffic in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances, bearing in mind that the routes and methods used change frequently and affect a growing number of countries. Therefore, systems to analyse the procedures and methods used in transit trafficking, especially in our case, should be developed so that programmes of technical and financial assistance through international and regional organizations to be used for strengthening the interdiction capabilities of transit States, including control of land, sea and air boundaries, can be created.

We have therefore taken national initiatives, which we consider essential to the containment and elimination of threat in our region. Tanzania has legislation that provides for strict control of the production, distribution, import and dispensing of all pharmaceutical and chemical substances in the country, in accordance with international instruments. The Cultivation of Noxious Plants Ordinance of 1926, as amended in 1987, prohibits the cultivation, possession and trafficking of all noxious plants. We are now reviewing our legislation in order to update it so that it can efficiently take care of this multifaceted problem.

(Mr. Ramadhani, United
Republic of Tanzania)

We believe it is vital to co-operate to combat this destructive problem, especially in our countries, where infrastructures have not yet been fully developed. For example, the enforcement of drug-abuse and trafficking laws is hampered in my country because of a lack of sufficient and adequately trained personnel, equipment and other facilities to cover all points of entry and exit. There is in particular a lack of training in drug identification, detection and testing. There is also a need for rehabilitation centres and trained personnel for the centres before the problem gets out of control.

Tanzania, like many other States, is conscious of the fact that it cannot successfully combat the drug problem single-handedly. I would therefore like to reiterate my delegation's call for the international community's co-operation against drug abuse and illicit trafficking, and its collaboration in the economic and social rehabilitation of drug victims.

Mr. PERRIER (Haiti) (interpretation from French): I wish to convey to Ambassador Garba the warmest congratulations of the Haitian delegation on his election to the presidency of the General Assembly at this special session. We are confident that, in line with the results the international community expects from it, this session will be a milestone in the struggle against drug trafficking.

Delegations from many countries and many regions have unanimously stressed here the dimensions of the international community's challenge in the face of the continuous expansion of the illicit trade in narcotics. Perhaps no phenomenon has contributed as much to our awareness of the interdependence of States. This trade in devastation and death spares no people, no continent. It is a global threat to the health and welfare of the individual, the economic, political and cultural foundations of society, and the stability, security and sovereignty of States.

(Mr. Perrier, Haiti)

In that context, we cannot fail to mention the tragic situation of the front-line countries in Latin America and the exemplary struggle waged, by Colombia in particular, to halt the activities of the drug-trafficking cartels.

The Republic of Haiti welcomes the urgency with which the international community is approaching the world struggle against drug trafficking. We followed with interest developments at the recent Cartagena summit. We note with some satisfaction that we are going beyond the often artificial division into producer, consumer and transit countries and that an increasingly broad consensus is emerging on the need for international solidarity, co-ordination and co-operation, which alone can lead to the eventual eradication of this scourge.

Specifically, we feel the international community is increasingly aware of the need for all States to demonstrate real political will to attack the root of the evil, which is unquestionably the growing demand in the international narcotics market.

We feel too that there is finally a clear awareness of the tragic inadequacy of the co-operative resources thus far made available by the international community to face effectively a traffic whose monetary value has, as noted in the Secretary-General's annual report, surpassed that of international trade in oil and is second only to the arms trade.

The Republic of Haiti is ready to play its role fully in the great co-operative movement that is emerging, and contribute to the eradication of the scourge of which we are a victim along with other highly vulnerable island nations of the Caribbean. At the regional and international levels we are ready to join in any project which, with respect for national sovereignty, would initiate innovative activities in the sphere of controlling the international narcotics trade.

(Mr. Perrier, Haiti)

The high priority the Government of His Excellency President Prosper Avril attaches to the fight against drugs and to international co-operation in that area is obvious. As a transit country particularly vulnerable because of its geographical location, Haiti is among the States that fights with resolve to stop the growing threat of the narcotics trade. Despite its scarce resources and a situation made all the more difficult by the unjustifiable freeze on international assistance, our country has attained results that are among the best achieved in this sphere.

(Mr. Perrier, Haiti)

Indeed, 4,000 kilos of cocaine were seized in the course of 1989 alone, representing a 300 per cent increase over the total seizures for previous years. Many marijuana plantations were destroyed. Aircraft and ships were confiscated in impressive numbers. One hundred and fifty-three traffickers were arrested, 43 of whom - 28 per cent of the total - were foreign nationals.

Furthermore, important data-compilation work has been undertaken on immigration and emigration, air traffic, customs control, the identification of clandestine landing strips, and ports monitoring. This data is the object of regular exchanges of information with our partners, in particular with the United States of America and the Dominican Republic.

Such co-operation, which has begun to yield results, has been initiated between Haiti and those countries. It will increase. Haiti, for its part, has welcomed with great interest initiatives taken by countries of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and wishes to develop constructive links in that respect with all our neighbours in the Caribbean.

At the same time, at the legal level, a process of strengthening Haitian legislation is under way, with a view to bringing our internal laws in line with the provisions of the 1988 Vienna Convention, which the Government of Haiti intends to ratify at the earliest possible date.

Nevertheless, important as those results may be, we are aware that much remains to be done. In our experience, in the area of joint action and struggle against drug trafficking, one can draw certain conclusions relating to the aim of this session.

First, the challenge of drugs is as crucial for a transit country as for any other country. Resolving the problem of the struggle against the international drug traffic inevitably calls for an important increase in public resources. Especially in our third world countries, one cannot lose sight of the pressure that

(Mr. Perrier, Haiti)

such obligations brings to bear on already scarce internal resources already being devoted to socio-economic development. In this respect, it seems essential to us that the imperative of international solidarity be reflected in the implementation of new assistance machinery aimed at financing projects that would follow an integrated approach allowing us to face the problem as a whole.

Secondly, it seems that United Nations specialized agencies must accord higher priority to the needs of third world countries, especially in the fields of training of experts and establishment and strengthening of administrative and judicial bodies involved in the struggle against drugs. Consequently, the allocation of sufficient resources to the institutions concerned - among others, the United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control - is essential.

Lastly, it is of crucial importance that the United Nations play a heightened role in co-ordinating efforts at the international level in order to assure the consistency of implemented strategies and the effectiveness of the collective response to the global threat that weighs upon the entire international community.

The battle now beginning is part of the loftiest ideals of the United Nations: to ensure the establishment of a better society free from the burden of every sort of peril. The fight against the production, illicit trade and abuse of drugs can be won. We are certain of that. We need only show the will. That is what has brought us here together, so that together we may work to implement a programme of action in keeping with the aims of our Organization and our view of man, his well-being and his dignity.

Mr. LUKABU KHABOUJI N'ZAJI (Zaire) (interpretation from French): On behalf of the delegation of Zaire, I should like to extend to Mr. Garba my warmest congratulations on his outstanding election to the presidency of the General Assembly at this special session. We also congratulate all the members of the Bureau.

(Mr. Lukabu Khabouji N'Zaji, Zaire)

The convening of the seventeenth special session of the General Assembly on drugs in which we are participating provides the world a unique opportunity to confront that most alarming danger involving the entire international community and invites us to engage in international co-operation against the illicit production, supply, demand, traffic and distribution of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances.

My country, Zaire, is party to the 1961 Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs, as amended by the 1972 Protocol amending the 1960 Single Convention, and to the 1971 Convention on Psychotropic Substances. The appropriate forums in my country are currently considering the possibility of Zaire's becoming a party to the last instrument in the series, the 1988 United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances.

The magnitude of the illicit production, supply, demand, traffic and distribution of hard drugs is of enormous concern to my country's authorities. My country's legislation forbids any cultivation of poppies or other plants that can be used as drugs. It very severely punishes all forms of possession or attempts at drug dealing. Measures aimed at discouraging the illicit use and traffic in drugs are strictly applied at our airports, ports and public places.

That is why, firmly convinced that the problem of drugs has international dimensions, and that only inter-State co-operation can cope with it, Zaire shares the conclusions drawn by the Preparatory Committee of this session as well as those of the Cartagena summit held in Colombia by the Heads of State of Colombia, the United States of America, Bolivia and Peru.

Along these lines, Zaire would like to make a few comments aimed at broadening our discussion of the matter. It is undeniable that drug use is the reason for numerous disturbances in today's society, since it causes an increase in crime,

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aggravates the state of health of youth that is exposed to illnesses both endemic and epidemic, and turns an entire category of people towards a lifestyle that is incompatible with the norms of civilized society.

The international community must do all in its power to engage in reflection and come up with solutions that can eradicate the scourge gnawing at society today - drugs. It would be inappropriate to seek remedies that can be applied only to specific regions, such as the Golden Triangle, the Golden Crescent or the Andean region. We believe that a global plan of action must be general in scope if we are to wage an adequate battle against drug traffickers wherever they may be.

(Mr. Lukabu Khabouji N'Zaji, Zaire)

For our part, we strongly hope that the following elements will be clearly defined: First, Zaire has always believed that a definite linkage exists between illicit drug trafficking and mercenaries. For that reason, we believe that the signature and swift ratification of the International Convention against the Recruitment, Use, Financing and Training of Mercenaries would drive a breach through the drug dealers' fortifications. We also believe that the laundering of funds derived from illicit arms sales or mercenary activities should, like that of drugs, be subject to the same regulations that provide for their confiscation. Secondly, the root causes of the ever-growing illicit drug trade, namely, the poverty, famine and disease rampant in certain parts of the world, must be most carefully analysed in arriving at appropriate solutions. We continue to believe that just compensation for raw materials from poor countries must be considered among the possible remedies to be advocated.

In conclusion, I should like to state that Zaire supports the idea of the proclamation of the United Nations decade against drug abuse for the years 1991 to 2000.

Mr. AL-NASSER (Qatar) (interpretation from Arabic): My delegation would like to express to the President its pleasure at seeing him presiding over the deliberations of the special session of the General Assembly. At the forty-fourth session he amply demonstrated his talents and diplomatic skills, and we are convinced that under his guidance the work of the special session will achieve the desired results.

The international community has at various times suffered under the scourge of drugs and psychotropic chemical products. When that occurs the results are the same in all States: the health of an important part of the population deteriorates, the social fabric is frayed and there is suffering at the

(Mr. Al-Nasser, Qatar)

economic level. No State, no society, is free from the production of or illicit traffic in drugs or from their use. All such practices are contrary to custom, laws, established values and religious precepts. All States and societies consider it in their interest to fight against that scourge and to halt the unbridled consumption of drugs, which undermines the young and prevents them from leading a useful life.

Thus, we are speaking here today at this special session convened to examine measures to remedy the problem and to concert the efforts of the international community so that they may bear fruit. Deterioration at the national and international levels owing to the production of and illicit traffic in drugs has brought us here today to strengthen international efforts, for those efforts have not so far been successful and have not enabled us to solve the problem. We must consider new approaches to solving it at the international and multilateral levels.

It is also clear that bilateral or tripartite conventions among the States most affected by drugs must go hand in hand with international measures, for the problem of drugs and the illicit traffic in drugs have effects that transcend the borders of countries. No country can fight the problem alone. The international community must adopt stricter and more effective measures, and those measures must be based on commitment and on a sense of realism.

Past studies and reports on the problem have shown that every time one facet of the drug cycle is eradicated, another takes its place, and drugs continue to flow from the production centres to the consumption centres. Today, the problem is clear: measures adopted in the past to fight against drugs, including their transport, stockpiling, processing and consumption, did not really attack the root of the problem, which can be clearly seen in the processing of cocaine. I refer to

(Mr. Al-Nasser, Qatar)

the chemical products that are essential to drug manufacture. The full economic scope of the problem becomes clear when we see that vast sums are accrued through the illicit trafficking in drugs. No one can ignore the fact that today many banks are involved in what is generally referred to as money laundering.

To that we must add the social, economic and psychological costs all States must bear. Today, degeneration among drug addicts is so severe that the problem has become compounded and has reached epidemic proportions. I am now referring to other effects, such as AIDS, which is mainly caused by the exchange of needles among drug addicts.

It would serve no purpose to dwell upon this problem, because various measures have been adopted at national and international levels and competent authorities have conceived many plans to combat it. But should we then give up and be content with what has been done so far? Have we arrived at maximum international co-operation in combating that scourge? On the contrary, the international community must increase its efforts to consolidate international co-operation so that its input is felt in every society. The United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances was the last international measure to be adopted with a view to strengthening co-operation, which is one of the reasons for the convening of this special session.

My delegation believes that the fight against drugs and drug abuse will bear fruit only if it is based on the co-operation of the whole of the international community, including producers, consumers and dealers. We must recognize that the efforts of all are inextricably linked. Production will not decline all by itself. We must effect a decrease in the demand for drugs. We must put an end to the export of the chemical bases essential to drug manufacturing in order to strike at the roots of the production of and illicit traffic in drugs.

(Mr. Al-Nasser, Qatar)

While this special session is to adopt a global programme of action and strengthen co-operation, the document must also reflect the resolve to avoid holding other major meetings or another special session to emphasize once again the need for international co-operation. As the Secretary-General stated in his address at the beginning of the session, this question is at the top of the list of our priorities. Hence it must be considered as important as those related to peace and security in the world.

While the 1980s have seen the end of the cold war, we hope that the 1990s will be successful in eliminating the most serious social scourge threatening the present generation, if not future generations.

The PRESIDENT: In accordance with the decision taken by the General Assembly at the first meeting of the special session, on 20 February, I call on the Permanent Observer of the Republic of Korea.

Mr. PARK (Republic of Korea): Despite the wide range of efforts at the national, regional and international levels, including those initiated by the United Nations, the world situation regarding the illicit use of and trafficking in drugs has reached a critical stage.

In some countries, illicit drug trafficking cartels, coupled with organized crime, have undermined, even at times paralysed, the political and economic structure to the extent of hampering the normal conduct of State affairs.

Particularly shocking is the estimate in the Secretary-General's 1989 annual report that the monetary value of drug trafficking has surpassed that of international trade in oil and is second only to the arms trade. This horrible fact is indicative of the seriousness of the drug problem facing mankind today.

(Mr. Park, Republic of Korea)

Under the current circumstances, no country, including my own, can be an exception to the disastrous effects caused by the abuse of and illicit trafficking in drugs. In many societies, the problem is closely related to some segments of the youth, international crime, the arms trade and the larger, more fundamental problem of underdevelopment.

The convening of the special session, together with the adoption in 1988 of the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, is an important step in coping with the drug menace. The Republic of Korea has welcomed both of these international actions.

Guidelines for the implementation of anti-drug measures provided in the United Nations Comprehensive Multidisciplinary Outline of Future Activities in Drug Abuse Control and in the 1988 United Nations Convention should be fully utilized in effectively controlling the abuse of illicit drugs.

Also urgently required is better co-ordination of, and sufficient financial support to, the United Nations drug control agencies. The expertise and experience of the United Nations drug units, such as the International Narcotic Control Board, should be fully called upon to provide necessary assistance to drug control operations at the national as well as the international level.

Looking at the roots of the drug problem, we share with many other nations serious concerns about its underlying link with underdevelopment. Economic recovery programmes, especially in the developing countries, should therefore take this aspect into account. In this sense, my country attaches great importance to economic and development co-operation with developing countries.

Active exchange of information among States concerning all aspects of drug demand, supply and trafficking should also be encouraged. It is necessary,

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therefore, to invigorate the function of existing United Nations bodies and Interpol in collecting and disseminating drug-related information.

The drug problem in the Republic of Korea has on the whole not been serious. In fact, drug addicts remain a relatively small minority of our population. Last year, however, my country was affected by an unprecedented increase in the incidence of drug abuse, mainly of methamphetamine, commonly called philopon or ice.

Currently, my Government is embarking on a broad range of anti-drug measures to cope with the problem. We have been awakened by the lesson some other countries have already learned at a great cost, that failure to control the drug menace at the incipient stage often leads to the rampancy of drug abuse.

In 1988, my Government therefore designated the drug problem as one of the five principal public enemies, and reorganized the national machinery effectively to tackle the problem of illicit drug supply and trafficking. My Government also launched a new drug strategy which is aimed not only at eliminating supply but also at reducing the demand of drugs and psychotropic substances in accordance with the 1988 United Nations Comprehensive Multidisciplinary Outline of Future Activities in Drug Abuse Control.

At this juncture, I would like to highlight some major components of our drug strategy. To attack the supply side of the drug problem, my Government has adopted the following programmes: first, through tighter control and management of lawful trade, the Korean Government intends to prevent diversion, that is, the illegal outflow of legal drugs and psychotropic substances; secondly, with the implementation of close investigation and strict punitive measures, my Government also intends to curtail the number of illicit drug suppliers; and, thirdly, by strengthening customs inspection activities at airports and seaports, the Korean authorities will prevent drug entry and transit.

(Mr. Park, Republic of Korea)

The other side of the problem, the drug demand, is also of major concern to us. Reduction in demand must be a fundamental remedy to the drug problem. To that end, my Government has selected 19 general hospitals as primary institutions to cure and rehabilitate drug abusers. Furthermore, a special medical centre, currently under construction, will open in 1992 exclusively for the treatment and rehabilitation of drug addicts.

Another effort to reduce the demand for drugs and psychotropic substances has been made in the form of preventive education. My Government has expanded anti-drug media campaigns, publications and public lectures to educate the general public about the dangers of drug addiction. Thanks to those efforts by the Government, public awareness of the gravity of the drug-abuse problem has been greatly heightened in my country recently.

I now wish to take this opportunity to reaffirm my country's commitment to international co-operation in the effort to defeat the scourge of drugs.

We have supported and participated in multilateral co-operation against the illicit production, supply, demand, trafficking and distribution of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances. As a party to the 1961 Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs and other related treaties, my country is giving positive consideration to acceding at an early date to the 1988 United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances. Deliberations are under way among the authorities concerned on the domestic measures that need to be taken for the accession.

Having been a member of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs three times in the past, my country has maintained a keen interest in United Nations activities in this field, including those of the International Narcotics Control Board, the United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control, and the Interregional Meetings of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies.

(Mr. Park, Republic of Korea)

Meanwhile, in order to enhance regional co-operation in drug law enforcement, my country has continued to co-operate with other nations on such issues as mutual legal assistance and extradition of drug criminals based on the principle of reciprocity. For instance, the Korean and Japanese authorities concerned have met annually since 1982 to discuss drug-law issues.

In the world today, humanity faces numerous challenges and threats that are unprecedented and global in scale. The international scourge of drugs is one of the most persistent and far-reaching menaces among them. I believe, however, that we need not be daunted by that grave problem. Through unity and co-operation, the international community can resolutely meet this global challenge and accomplish a great deal. To that end, my country will make its best efforts.

The Republic of Korea delegation believes that the political declaration and the global programme of action to be adopted at this special session should commit the nations of the world to meeting the challenge of eradicating the plague of drugs.

The PRESIDENT: In accordance with the decision taken by the General Assembly at the first meeting of the special session, on 20 February, I call on the Permanent Observer of the Holy See to the United Nations.

Archbishop MARTINO (Holy See): The Holy See expresses sincere appreciation for the opportunity offered by the Member States to address this special session of the General Assembly.

The human race has been visited with wars, famine, earthquakes, pestilences and plagues, but never in memory have we been confronted with a threat of such frightening dimensions and lethal force as the contemporary drug problem.

In accordance with the mandate of the General Assembly, the International Conference on Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking met at Vienna in June 1987, and dramatically expanded our vision of the chemical-abuse issue, placing emphasis on

(Archbishop Martino, Holy See)

treatment, rehabilitation and prevention as well as on the supply and demand of illicit drugs. On 7 December 1987, in resolution 42/112, the General Assembly affirmed its commitment to the findings of the Vienna Conference.

Of singular note are the premises, the *raison d'être* for the actions taken at Vienna. The States participating in the Conference state the following in the declaration:

"Believing in human dignity and the legitimate aspirations of human-kind for a decent life with moral, humanitarian and spiritual values in a healthy, safe environment,

"Concerned at the human suffering, loss of life, social disruption, especially the effect on youth who are the wealth of nations, brought about by drug abuse world-wide,

"Aware of its effects on States' economic, social, political and cultural structures, and its threat to their sovereignty and security". (United Nations Publication sales no. E.88.XI.1, p.1)

Drug abuse has all the markings of an intractable disease in the light of past efforts throughout the world to address the threat without, apparently, any measurable positive outcome. In some sectors, the very harshest measures, along with clear certainty of punishment, have yet to establish proof that deterrence alone yields results. Equal futility has been met by others who have leaned in the direction of legalizing drugs or drug-substitutes with the goal of containing the problem to a limited few, if not condoning the abuse itself.

It seems to us that the intractable nature of drug abuse to no small degree centres on that very insistence upon the reduction of an incredibly complex phenomenon to a simplistic response. As an experiment in social or political engineering, it continues to inhibit the path to the resolution of drug abuse, unwittingly rendering many of us part of the problem rather than the solution.

(Archbishop Martino, Holy See)

Can it be that the apparently irreversible character of the drug epidemic might also be attributed to the inability to apportion national priorities? The young are often a silent, non-voting, expendable segment of the population, whose well-being can be readily sacrificed in favour of prevailing socio-political, economic or other urgent realities. In some nations, resources spent on military defence, on economic crises and bureaucratic largesse leave little room for the needs of the young. While all agree that the young represent a national treasure and the future of their people, more often than not that declaration fails to move beyond oratory to serious commitment.

(Archbishop Martino, Holy See)

Essentially, however, it seems that the persistent epidemic of drugs currently afflicting almost every sector of public life remains with us at increasingly alarming levels because we have defied the dynamics and root causes of the problem. We move swiftly into a phase that we might describe as "damage control," thereby conceding that the problem is either beyond our grasp or that, in pursuing an answer, we simply refuse to go beyond the symptom level to root causes. Excesses on both the punitive and permissive sides in fielding national strategies in the drug crisis speak to that abandonment of responsibility.

The abuse of drugs and psychotropic substances is essentially a deeply rooted spiritual deprivation, with psychosocial dimensions and of a highly contagious nature. Like all epidemics, its spread is fuelled by the infected, the drug abuser, rather than by the supplier. Its ineluctable progression is geometric in scope and, in some countries, practising abusers, via peer-group pressure, introduce three or four young neophytes a month. Major traffickers and suppliers constantly seek to expand their market in every possible way. However, in many areas where drugs have reached pandemic levels, suppliers generally find themselves in a position in which it is difficult to maintain sufficient stock to keep up with demand. Unless those epidemiological factors are recognised, supply-reduction efforts will continue to be fruitless. If one particular drug is successfully restricted, abusers will swiftly shift to another. If foreign imports dry up, domestic substitutes will quickly fill the void.

Yes, demand-reduction rests at the heart of any sound strategy, and the demand-reduction equation balances the young person against his personal life-inventory. Pope John Paul II, in an address to young, recovering drug-abusers in Italy, spoke to that central reality. He said:

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"Man has a great need to know whether it is worthwhile to be born, to live, to struggle, to suffer and to die, and whether it is worthwhile to commit oneself to some ideal superior to material and contingent interests - whether, in a word, there is a 'Why' that justifies his earthly existence. ...

"Unfortunately, in our age scientific rationalism and the structures of industrial society, which is characterized by the iron law of production and consumption, have created a state of mind that is fixed on a plan of temporal and earthly values, which deprive human life of all transcendental significance. ...

"This, then, is the essential problem: giving a meaning to the human being, to his choices, to his life and to his journey." (Papal address at Castel Gandolfo, 5 August 1979)

The school best suited to teach the young those transcendental values is the family. Sadly, today, while the central values of life are shrouded in hostility and denial, the family finds itself besieged by forces inimical to its own viability. Neglect, abandonment and failure at the parental level, fuelled and reinforced by cultural factors destructive of family life, have visited upon generations of young people the catalogue of horrors that we read in the mass media on almost a daily basis: physical and sexual abuse, suicide, desertion, rejection, addiction in utero, doping in the world of sports, the plague of AIDS and a host of others. It comes as small surprise, then, that this legion of frightened children should reach out for pain-blocking chemicals in a vain attempt to escape their despair through self-medication. The Holy See raises its voice today before the family of nations and this good and caring Assembly on behalf of those frightened children and their despair.

(Archbishop Martino, Holy See)

The time has come for us to look beyond the issues of drug cultivation, commerce, trafficking, interdiction and enforcement to those regions of the maimed, the dying and the hopeless. They are numbered in the millions. They are found both in our urban centres and on our farms. They are the walking wounded of our world. Long ago, the spark of youth faded from their eyes. The time is upon us to look too at the responsibility of politicians, particularly at the level of supply and the prevention of drug abuse. That is precisely the challenge before us. The door has been opened by our colleagues at Vienna, with the comprehensive multidisciplinary outline of future activities in drug-abuse control.

However, given the urgency, as well as the lateness, of the hour, the Holy See respectfully proposes the following specific priorities:

One, the recovery option, through treatment and rehabilitation, must remain the highest priority and be supported energetically by governmental and private resources.

Two, the return of safety to community streets through efficient local enforcement must likewise be given a priority in strategic planning and application of resources over border and extranational interdiction efforts. That shift in emphasis will restore the basic quality of life while simultaneously propelling the drug abuser into treatment.

Three, the deterrence of future generations from taking their place among the addicted must be given priority through sound prevention programmes that focus upon formation - rather than information - for parents and children, for teachers in the schools, for sporting-club members and for those who work in the mass media.

Four, the sharing of skills should move forward among the family of nations in the all-important treatment, rehabilitation and prevention areas, through the establishment of national and international training centres and networks for the

(Archbishop Martino, Holy See)

equipping of professional treatment and prevention leadership. In line with efforts to train professionals in law-enforcement and in the detection of drug traffic we must swiftly move forward with resource training centres on the demand side.

In line with those reflections, the Holy See pledges to the community of nations the continuation and strengthening of the multifaceted activities that the Catholic Church has inspired and conducts all over the world in the field of drug-abuse prevention and rehabilitation.

The PRESIDENT: In accordance with the decision taken by the General Assembly at the first meeting of the special session, on 20 February, I call on the Permanent Observer of Switzerland to the United Nations.

Mr. ROOS (Switzerland): On behalf of the Swiss Federal Council I should like to thank the General Assembly for having allowed my country to speak at this seventeenth special session. I should also like to congratulate you, Sir, on your election as President of the special session. You have already demonstrated your excellent personal qualities in presiding over the forty-fourth session of the General Assembly.

The United Nations initiative to devote a special session of the General Assembly to the problem of drugs is very timely. An increasingly large number of States are now aware that at the end of this century we face one of the greatest challenges to human society, which is threatened by a disquieting development in a number of regions of the world: a great network of criminal organizations that not only obtain untold profits from drug trafficking in a highly immoral way but use violence and terrorism to attain their ends. States at the front line in the fight against those organizations must be able to count on our total solidarity and support.

We firmly believe that for the drug producing and consuming countries the best weapon still lies in concerted action, and that therefore international co-operation is indispensable. Whether we are talking about combating drug production or trying to eliminate drug abuse and remedying the effects of addiction through treatment and rehabilitation, or stemming the illicit trafficking of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances, this special session will be a decisive catalyst for the success of this initiative.

My country firmly supports the initiatives taken by other international forums attempting to combat the adverse consequences of drug abuse and illicit

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trafficking. Switzerland takes an active part in the work of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs and the Economic and Social Council, of which it is a member. It has considerably increased its contributions to the United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control in view of its importance.

International instruments have played an important part in combating drugs at the global level. That is why Switzerland is a party to the Single Convention on Narcotic Substances of 1961, and why we signed the Convention against Illicit Trafficking in Psychotropic Substances of 1988. Ratification of that Convention and accession to the Convention on Psychotropic Substances of 1971 means changes in our domestic laws, and we are now studying how we can become parties to all relevant international instruments as soon as possible. We are doing everything in our power to accede to these agreements so that the control of precursor substances and psychotropic substances can be carried out very strictly within the possibilities of our present laws, so that Switzerland cannot be used to circumvent laws adopted in other countries.

To be effective, co-ordinated international action should be supplemented by national measures. We must attack the causes of the scourge, which include social isolation, the existential bewilderment of our young people, and the malaise inherent in our civilization. Therefore the problems of combating drug abuse should be considered within the framework of public health as well as social and family policies. That is why Switzerland believes that in order to reduce demand, preventive and therapeutic activities are essential. We therefore support any initiatives in this context.

We believe it is imperative to establish juridical and institutional instruments to enable us to co-operate speedily and effectively with States that request our assistance. Our Parliament will therefore soon adopt new criminal legislation to prevent the laundering of money, and we hope it will enter into force in the months to come.

(Mr. Roos, Switzerland)

I wish to stress here that in any surveys of offences connected with drug trafficking the investigative authorities have the power to block accounts and to penetrate the secrecy of the banking world. Banks are required to provide the necessary information. Furthermore the new provisions of the Swiss criminal code will contain the principle that anyone who covers up a relationship, even an indirect one, between money and a crime or misdemeanour is subject to sanctions. Stricter legal norms on the confiscation of illegal income and the possibility of sentencing criminal organizations or enterprises implicated in such business will now be subjected to an accelerated examination procedure to allow for their speedy adoption.

Switzerland attaches very great importance to the success of this special session through the adoption, inter alia, of the Global Programme of Action for future activities to combat drug abuse. Our authorities commend the high quality of the draft and endorse the multidisciplinary approach, which is balanced. We hope it will have the required impact on drug-abuse control, and that it will be seen as a useful instrument for public authorities and professional associations, university institutions and non-governmental organizations and the various bodies involved in drug-abuse control.

Furthermore my country expects this special session of the General Assembly to play a more forceful role in the United Nations at the global level in the campaign against drug trafficking. We are ready to offer our co-operation here.

My authorities hope that our work will constitute an effective response to the growing concerns that have been aroused in Switzerland and in a number of other countries with regard to drug abuse and illicit trafficking in narcotics and psychotropic substances.

My delegation will certainly do everything in its power to ensure that the hopes placed in this New York session will not be disappointed but, rather, reinforced.

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The PRESIDENT: One representative has requested to speak in exercise of the right of reply. May I remind members that, in accordance with General Assembly decision 34/401, statements in the exercise of the right of reply are limited to 10 minutes for the first intervention and to five minutes for the second intervention, and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. WATSON (United States of America): It is indeed unfortunate that I must exercise my right of reply to the remarks made today by the representative of Cuba. It is indeed unfortunate, but hardly unexpected, that Cuba has ignored and cast aside the positive spirit of co-operation and conciliation which has permeated the halls of the United Nations since the first gavel fell on the opening of this historic special session.

The Cuban representative accused the United States of trampling on the dignity and honour of the Panamanian people. The United States acted in Panama in self-defence and in defence of the Panama Canal Treaties. Our action was consistent with the right of self-defence granted in the United Nations Charter. I need not dwell at length on the immediate events and provocations that precipitated our action.

On numerous occasions, senior officials of my Government expressed our willingness to work through the Organization of American States and attempt to deal creatively with the challenge to democracy represented by Manuel Noriega. We have stated in no uncertain terms that we wished to avoid having to take unilateral action to defend our legitimate and threatened interests.

My country had no argument with Panama or the people of Panama. We welcome the return of democracy to that country, and we will do all we can to promote it. And we are gratified by the overwhelming support of the Panamanian people, which the Cuban representative failed to acknowledge, for the United States action which contributed to the restoration of democracy in their country.

(Mr. Watson, United States)

The Cuban representative mentioned the effort a few weeks ago by a United States Coast Guard vessel to inspect a Panamanian flag vessel suspected of trafficking in drugs. As I stated in my remarks in the Security Council on 9 February, the United States Coast Guard cutter was engaged in a normal and routine law enforcement activity. The action taken by the United States was fully consistent with international maritime law and practice. The United States sought and received permission from the flag State, Panama, stop and search the vessel. The United States Coast Guard cutter resorted to authorized and appropriate force only after the captain's continued refusal to stop and after exhausting all internationally recognized means of stopping the vessel.

By instructing the crew of the vessel to resist an authorized and routine boarding by Coast Guard officials, the Government of Cuba jeopardized the lives and safety of its citizens and demonstrated blatant disregard for legitimate law enforcement efforts to investigate and interdict illicit narcotics trafficking in the region.

The Government of the United States is unable to understand the Government of Cuba's action in the face of repeated Cuban assurances that the Cuban Government seeks to co-operate with the United States and other nations in combating illicit narcotics trafficking. The Government of Cuba's active efforts to thwart the United States Coast Guard search of the vessel call seriously into question its publicly stated claim of actively combating narcotics trafficking.

The meeting rose at 9.30 p.m.